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PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY

OF

SOCIAL LIFE;

OR

*THE ART OF CONVERSING WITH MEN:*

AFTER THE GERMAN

OF

B A R O N K N I G G E.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

*B r P. W I L L,*

MINISTER OF THE REFORMED GERMAN CONGREGATION IN  
THE SAVOY.

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VOLUME THE FIRST.

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L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR T. CADELL, JUN. AND W. DAVIES.

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TO

WILLIAM CURTIS, GENT.

AT

HAMBURG;

*THESE VOLUMES*

ARE DEDICATED,

AS A MARK OF HIS ESTEEM AND AFFECTION,

BY

*THE EDITOR.*

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## P R E F A C E.

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THE greater part of the subsequent pages is the result of the observations and experience of Baron KNIGGE, a Nobleman whose talents are justly respected in Germany, where he acted a conspicuous part in the republic of letters, and on the stage of the great world. His active temper urged him with irresistible impetuosity to render his abilities and scientific knowledge useful to mankind ; but being persecuted in the very beginning of his public career, by the heavy blows of adverse fate, beset by numerous enemies whom his independent spirit and the superiority of his mental accomplishments had provoked, frequently misguided by his too easy confidence in the rectitude of men, precipitated by his fiery enthusiasm for truth and the happiness of his brethren, and an implacable enemy

to despotism and intolerance, he failed in all his plans to secure a post in which he could have exerted his talents and the benevolence of his heart for the benefit of his fellow-citizens. Aspersions and the persecution of a set of men who hated him, because he scorned to cringe and to be subservient to their selfish views and oppressions, compelled him to quit his native country, and to become a citizen of the world at large. He roved Germany, for some years, in all directions, sometimes being a visitor of the palaces of the great, and sometimes a humble pedestrian, mixing with the middle and inferior ranks, and exerting all the energy of his mind to accommodate himself, as much as honesty and the consciousness of his innate dignity would permit, to the prejudices, customs, and peculiarities of those with whom he cultivated a temporary connexion. This enabled him to acquire a most extensive and profound knowledge of the human heart, of its numerous turnings and windings, of the most effective means of

getting access to it, of the principal causes of the want of social happiness which he discovered in the splendid circles of the great, in the humble habitations of the middle ranks, and in the cottages of the poor, and the most successful means of rendering our intercourse with our brethren more comfortable and cheerful. The acquisition of that useful store of the most valuable knowledge animated him with additional zeal to contribute his mite to the reformation of our degenerated age, and in this disposition of mind he became more intimately acquainted with Weishaupt and Zwack, the two principal founders of the Order of the Illuminati. Their gigantic plan to collect a host of the greatest geniuses of all ranks and countries around them, to check by the joint efforts of their abilities and power the progress of the growing evil, their pressing solicitations to take a leading part in their confederacy, and the hope of being enabled by such a powerful union to employ his talents more successfully for the benefit of

mankind, were charms which his heart could not resist. He accepted the offer, and became one of the most active and successful leaders of the union. But alas ! he soon beheld with grief and sorrow that the alluring prospects which had been held out to him, were nothing but a charming dream, and was at last convinced that the society in which he had been received, would never be capable of accomplishing the arduous task which was the primary object of their union, as but few of its members were animated with that heroic disinterestedness and self-denial which were required, if the power invested in their hands were to prove beneficial to the world. Party-spirit, ambition and other passions soon began to undermine the fabric ; caballing traitors abused the power which the society possessed, to revenge themselves upon their enemies, or to satisfy their thirst for dominion and wealth. The union, which might have become a blessing to mankind, threatened to prove a scourge to every state where its influence



prevailed ; the knave and the honest man were persecuted without discrimination, and Baron Knigge redoubled in vain his energy and zeal to purify the corrupted society, and to destroy the poison with which it was infected. His exertions were fruitless ; his own associates became his most inveterate enemies, and he saw himself compelled to renounce all connexion with his corrupted brethren, and to retire to his former seclusion from the world, after having learnt by experience, and at the expence of his tranquillity and health, that no society of men, how great soever their combined talents, and how well calculated their plans may be, can hope to accelerate the age of general illumination and virtue contrary to the course of nature, which is slow, but progressive and sure ; and that it is more becoming a man who wishes to be happy himself and to promote the happiness of his brethren, to take the world as it is, to do whatever lays in his power to ameliorate our corrupted age gradually, without noise and with-

out relying too much on the co-operation of others, and to counteract the bad effects of the spreading corruption by a prudent and wise conduct, than to convulse the natural order of things by forcing more light upon our cotemporaries than their weak eyes can bear. Actuated by this dear-bought experience, he now confined himself entirely to the exertion of his literary talents, and dedicated the rest of his life to the laudable employment of circulating in his writings rules of prudence, the practice of which will enable us to avert many of those calamities and painful disappointments that are the natural consequences of our want of knowledge of the world, and of the prejudices, the ignorance, passions, bodily and mental infirmities, vices and the vitiated taste of those with whom we live, and to prosecute our career with security and success. Of all the books which he wrote for that purpose, none was better received and more generally admired than his celebrated work "*On Conversation with Men.*" (Uber

den Umgang mit Menschen,) which contains a most valuable store of practical lessons of wisdom, abounds with a profound knowledge of the world and the human heart, and is unanimously allowed to be the best essay on the real Philosophy of Social Life which ever has been published in any country. It went through five editions in the course of a few years, and, if I may presume to judge of its usefulness from my own experience, stands foremost amongst all the books which ever have been written to promote social happiness.

The advantages which I have derived from the study and application of the excellent observations and rules which this work contains, and the salutary effects which I have seen it produce in the life of those of my pupils to whom I recommended it, and who followed the sage instructions with which it abounds, made me wish most ardently to see it dressed in an English garb, and circulated in a country which is so dear to me, and which of late has naturalized so many

inferiour children of the German Muse, But as the original is entirely modified after the local wants, customs, and situation of Germany, and, besides, contains many chasms which I wished to fill up in an English edition, I was obliged almost entirely to new-mould it, in order to render it more congenial to the soil into which I intended transplanting it, to collect the additions which it wanted with care and assiduity, to read all the books in which I expected to find materials that suited my purpose, and to make such observations as would enable me to ascertain how the authour would have shaped his rules and instructions, if he had wrote for an English public—a task which procrastinated the publication of these volumes more than three years.

The most valuable additions which the succeeding sheets contain, were gathered from the works of Bahrd, Zollikoser, Reinhard, Zimmerman (the celebrated authour of the publication *On Solitude*) and Fessler—names which are

highly respected on the German Parnassus. As for those that are the result of my own reflections and observations, they are too few to add anything very material to the intrinsic merit of these volumes, or to injure the fame of their original authour.

By giving this work the title of *Practical Philosophy of Social Life*, I by no means presume to offer it to the Public as a *complete system* of that branch of philosophy, but only wish that it may be regarded as a collection of fragments, from which some abler hand may hereafter compose a structure more deserving of the name.

As it will be my highest ambition to render this adopted child of my Muse more complete and generally useful in a second edition, if it should have the good fortune to meet with a favourable reception, the Reviewers will do me the justice to believe, that I shall feel myself infinitely obliged to them for every candid remark and censure that can tend to open my eyes to its defects; for the truth is, I do not presume to

flatter myself with the idea of having rendered the succeeding volumes as perfect as I could have wished, and therefore do not stand in need of gentle correction.

MAY 18, 1799.

*P. WILL.*

## INTRODUCTION.

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WE frequently see that the most prudent and judicious people take steps in common life which astonish us ; we experience but too often, that men who have a more than common theoretical knowledge of the human heart, become victims of the grossest imposition ; we have numerous opportunities of observing that the most experienced and skilful people on common incidents apply the most contrary means, and strive in vain, to operate on others ; and notwithstanding their great superiority of genius, frequently depend upon the follies of others, and the whims and obstinacy of weaker minds ; that they must suffer themselves to be ruled and abused by persons who possess not half their abilities and deserve not to be compared with them ; whereas others, who are extremely poor in spirit and destitute of all intrinsic merit, ac-

comply with things which the wise scarcely dare to wish performing. We see that many an honest man is almost entirely neglected, that the wittyest and brightest geniuses but too often act a pitiful part in societies where all eyes are directed at them, and all are watching with avidity every word they are about to utter ; we see them sit mute in a corner, or hear them utter only common and trivial things, while an inferior genius contrives to combine and dress up the small sum of notions he has accidentally picked up, with so much dexterity, as to create general interest, and to be thought even by scientific men, to possess no small share of knowledge and judgment. We further see, that the most striking beauties are not generally admired, while persons who are endowed only with a small share of personal charms excite general admiration.—In short, we observe every day, that the most judicious and learned men, are, if not the unfittest for worldly business, at least so unfortunate as to be neglected, because they are destitute of the art of showing themselves in a favourable light, and that the most cultivated



minds who are gifted by nature with internal and personal perfections, frequently are least capable of appearing to advantage.

Many people imagine themselves entitled, by superiour accomplishments, to disregard trifling rules of social propriety and all conventional laws of decorum. But this is a very fatal infatuation. We are, indeed, willing to excuse great faults counterbalanced by great accomplishments, because people of more refined feelings most commonly have more violent passions ; but in situations where the latter are not affected, the man of superior rank ought to act with more prudence than a person of the common stamp ; and no one wishing to live and act in society, can be excused for despising its innocent customs.

By this observation however we do not mean to reflect blame upon those that voluntarily resign the admiration of the titled and untitled populace, to which a truly wise man is sometimes compelled to have recourse. It is but natural that a man of superior talents should be reserved and silent in companies where he is

not understood ; that a man who possesses genuine wit and a refined judgment, should not demean himself to act the merry-maker in a circle of trifling and empty-headed coxcombs ; it is also natural, that a man who is graced with a certain dignity of character, should have too much noble pride to become an equal associate with every indifferent set of people who are of no importance to him, to fall in with the tone which conceited striplings have adopted on their travels, or that he should bend in obedient submission to all the dictates of ever-changing fashion, which but too frequently receives its shape and form from dancers, actors, and tailors, or is modelled by folly and vice ; it is obvious, that it is more becoming a youth to be modest and unassuming than intruding, arrogant, and ranting, like most of our young men ; that the wiser a noble-minded man is, the more modest, diffident of his own knowledge, and the less intruding he will be ; that the more conscious a person is of intrinsic and real merit, the less art he will employ to exhibit his perfections, as a real beauty despises all those mean alluring

artifices of coquetry by which some females strive to attract notice.—But of all this we are not particularly speaking here.

Neither do we allude to the folly of the offended pride of those that are actuated by immoderate and arrogant pretensions, demanding to be constantly adulated, flattered and distinguished, and who act but a sorry part on being overlooked; nor do we speak of the offended arrogance of an absurd pedant, who grows ill-humoured when he has the misfortune of not being known and caressed every where as a great luminary. We also do not animadvert here upon the consequences of the conduct of the gross Cynic, who according to his Hottentot system, despises all rules prescribed in Social Life by general consent and mutual politeness; or on the silliness of those eccentric pretenders, who presume to be privileged by the imaginary superiority of their genius, to disregard all the laws of custom, decorum and reason. And when we assert, that the wisest and most judicious people very frequently miss their aim in conversation, and in the prosecution of

respect, as well as in civil and other advantages ; we likewise cannot pay any regard to the heavy blows of misfortune which sometimes persecute the best of men ; nor to the effects of an unhappy, passionate or unsociable temper, which in many people eclipses the most excellent qualities. This observation rather alludes to those people who combine the best will and sincere probity with very prominent good qualities, and an indefatigable zeal to pass honourably and smoothly through the world, to establish their own prosperity and to promote that of their fellow-men, but notwithstanding are overlooked and fail in their diligent endeavours to effect so laudable a purpose. What is the cause of this phenomenon ? Of what quality are they destitute which others possess, who, notwithstanding their being devoid of intrinsic worth, attain the highest degree of prosperity ?—They are destitute of what the French call *esprit de conduite*,—*of the art of conversing with men* : an art which the blockhead frequently catches sooner without studying it, than the judicious, wise, or witty ; the art of rendering themselves noticed,

distinguished and respected, without provoking envy ; to accommodate the mselves to the various tempers, opinions and passions of men, without being deceitful ; to be able to fall in unaffectedly with the tone of every company, without losing the originality of their character, or demeaning themselves to low flattery. The man whom nature has not gifted with this happy disposition, must acquire by the study of men a certain pliancy, sociability, moderation, forbearance, self-denial, dominion over his passions, watchfulness over himself, and the serenity of an uniformly equal temper ; and he will obtain possession of that useful art which only with justice can be called the *Practical Philosophy of Social Life*. We ought however not to confound it with that noxious and mean servility of a contemptible slave, who suffers himself to be abused by every one, gives himself up to every knave to obtain a meal, humbles himself before every powerful wretch to procure some lucrative post, is silent when he ought to speak his mind freely, assists in the execution of roguery, and idolizes titled stupidity. In treating on that spirit of

conduct, which must guide us in our conversation with men of all classes, I do not however mean to write a book on the art of complimenting, but purpose laying before the reader some results of the experience I have had during a long intercourse with men of all ranks and situations. I do not promise to delineate a complete and regular system of Practical Philosophy of Social Life, but shall give only fragments and materials which will serve as a basis for further investigation. It is extremely important for various reasons, that a person wishing to associate with men and to live amongst them, should study the art of accommodating himself to their manners, customs, tone and disposition; and of this art I am going to say something.—But what calling can I have to write a book on the spirit of conduct—I who in my life having so frequently displayed but very little of it? Does it become me to presume to dispense knowledge of men, while I myself having been so repeatedly a victim of such imprudent indiscretion as scarcely could have been excusable in a novice? Can it be expected, that



a man who lives almost entirely secluded from human society, could teach the art of conversing with men? Let us see, my friends, what I can reply to this objection.

If through dear-bought experience I have been rendered sensible of my own imprudence—so much the better! Who is more competent to warn against dangers than a man who has been involved himself in difficulties? If temper and weakness, (or should I not rather call it sensibility of a feeling heart, which is always ready to give itself up to others), if a strong desire for the blessings of love and friendship, for opportunities of serving others and of exciting sympathy, have frequently promoted me to act imprudently, and to disregard the voice of cool and reflecting reason; my errors did not proceed from short-sightedness, simplicity and want of knowledge of men, but from an internal impulse to love and to render myself beloved, to be active and to do good. As for the rest, there are perhaps but few men, who in so short a period will be involved in such singular relations and connexions with people

of all descriptions as I have been within the last twenty years ; and should a man be similarly circumstanced, and not intirely neglected by nature and education, he must indeed meet with numerous opportunities in the space of so many years, that will enable him to make observations and to warn against those dangers he could not escape himself. My living at present retired and secluded from the world, is neither owing to misanthropy nor to a silly singularity. I have very important motives for it ; but to deliver them here at large would be speaking too much of myself, especially as I shall be obliged, at least, to give some account of my own experience in this Introduction. Therefore I beg leave to say thus much :—I was very young when I first stepped upon the theatre of the great world and the court. My temper was lively, restless and easy to be affected, and my blood warm ; the seeds of many violent passions lay concealed within me ; I had been somewhat spoiled in my first education, and had too great attention paid my little person, which induced me to demand too much consideration from



those around me. Grown up in a country where flattery, dissimulation and cringing are not much encouraged, I was indeed but little prepared for that pliancy I wanted to ensure success among utter strangers and in despotic states. The instruction of young minds in true policy is frequently very unsuccessful, and not rarely attended with considerable dangers; our own experience in fact is the best instructor. These lessons produce the most salutary effect (if we pay not *too* dear for them) and make the deepest impression. My liveliness caused me to commit many inconsistent actions; I was precipitate in every thing, always doing either too much or too little, ever being too late or too soon; because invariably, I was about to commit a folly, or had to retrieve one. I generally missed my aim from omitting to act upon a simple plan. When I first appeared at court, I was too careless, too open and unsuspicious, which did me a great deal of injury. I resolved however to become a complete courtier; my conduct grew artificial, and I lost the confidence of good men; I was too pliant, and this de-

prived me of external regard, internal dignity and self-consistency. Being dissatisfied with myself and others, I grew reserved and singular. This created astonishment ; my society was courted, and my sociability revived again. I renewed my former connexions, discarded my singularities, and the harm which my seclusion from the world had created and which had attracted the attention of others, disappeared at once. At another period I lashed the follies of the times with some degree of wit ; I was now dreaded, but not beloved ; this grieved me ; and being desirous to repair this loss, I proved myself a harmless being, displayed kind and benevolent sentiments, and shewed that I was incapable of hurting and persecuting others—But what was the consequence ? Every one of those I had offended by my former conduct, or who imagined themselves the object of my sarcasms, abused me on seeing me defend myself only with blunted weapons which could do no harm. At other times, when my satirical humour was encouraged by the applause of jovial companions, I lashed great and little fools without mercy ; the wits laughed ;

but those that were wiser shook their heads and treated me with coldness. Being desirous of showing that my humour was not tinctured with malice, I ceased ridiculing others, and palliated every folly. This however made me appear to some a simpleton, while others suspected me of hypocrisy. When I selected my companions from among the most excellent and enlightened men, I applied in vain for the protection of a blockhead who was at the helm of government; and when I associated with people of inferior talents, I was treated as belonging to the same class with them. People destitute of education and of low rank abused me, when I treated them with more than usual kindness; and of those of higher rank I made enemies when they offended my vanity. I now made the blockhead too sensible of my superiority, and was persecuted; I was too modest, and experienced neglect; I accommodated myself to all the peculiarities of my connexions, and fell in with the tone of those indifferent societies I frequented and thereby lost my precious time, the regard of wise and good men, and particularly self-satisfaction; at

other times I was too artless, and from want of self-confidence acted a pitiful part when I ought and could have shewn myself to advantage. At one period I too rarely went abroad, and was suspected of pride or puerile fear of men; at another I shewed myself every where, and was accused of being intruding. While I was a young man, I abandoned myself imprudently and exclusively to every one that called himself my friend and shewed me affection, and was often dreadfully deceived and disappointed in my sweetest expectations; afterwards I became the friend of every one, and ready to serve any person who wanted my assistance, in consequence no one attached himself to me, because none of my connexions valued a heart accessible to any that sought friendship. When I expected too much I was deceived; and when I gave up all confidence in the faith and probity of men, I could enjoy no social pleasure or be interested by any object. The public are not ignorant, that I was active in the association of the Illuminati, as they were called. This union which was directed by people who—on account of their

rank, birth, civil relations and talents, were classed with the most important men in Germany—made the knowledge of the human heart a particular object of their study. The person who managed almost the whole affairs of that extensive society (which was my case for a considerable time), had, indeed, opportunities of becoming acquainted with people of all ranks, of very different culture and disposition, and to observe them in various situations; however as the intercourse with most of them was carried on by way of letters only, my practical experience gained in the whole but little by it. The treasure I gathered at those courts where I spent a great part of my life, was by far more considerable. But I must confess, that, although I made many observations at these theatres of folly and deceit, yet I improved but little in the art of rendering them advantageous to myself, as I never could bridle my lively temper so much as to be capable of concealing my blind side so carefully as I ought to have done.—And thus did the years elapse in which I could have made my fortune, as it is commonly termed. Now,

since I have acquired a more perfect knowledge of men, and my eyes have been opened by experience, which has rendered me more circumspect and capable of operating on the human heart, it is too late to put that knowledge in practice. The few advantages I could obtain by it for the rest of my life, are not worth the trouble and exertion which it would cost me; and it is as little becoming a man, whose principles have been fixed by age and experience, to begin at so late a period to grow pliant, as it would be pardonable in him to turn fop. It is now indeed, too late to begin with the practice of my experience; however it is not yet too late to point out to young men the path they ought to pursue; therefore let us see what I can do, and come nearer to the point.

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# PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY

## OF SOCIAL LIFE.

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### CHAPTER I.

*General Rules and Observations to guide us in our  
Conversation with Men.*

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#### SECTION I.

OUR pretensions are generally the standard by which the world judges of our abilities and merits. A golden rule! A theme sufficient for a folio volume on the spirit of conduct and the means of gaining our point in the world; a maxim, the truth of which is confirmed by the experience of all ages. This experience teaches the adventurer and boaster to persuade the multitude that he is a man of consequence; to speak of his connexions with princes and ministers of state, who frequently even do not know that he exists, in terms that procure him, if not more, at least, many a meal and access to families of rank and fortune. I knew a man who spoke in this manner in all companies of

his intimacy with the Emperor Joseph II. and Prince Kaunitz, although I am certain that these great men scarcely knew his name, and had heard nothing of him, except that he was a turbulent man and a libeller. As no one inquired into the truth of his pretensions, it enabled him to gain for a short time so much credit with many people as to induce them to apply for his interference with the Emperor, whenever they had occasion to petition for something. In such cases he used to write to some great man or other at Vienna, and boasted of the number of his noble friends in such terms as to obtain frequently a civil and kind answer, which he turned to further advantage.

This experience emboldens many a man of a merely superficial knowledge to decide positively in matters of which he, an hour before, scarcely knew any thing; and to give his opinion in terms which deter the modest literati from contradicting and putting questions to him that would expose his ignorance. This experience encourages the presumptuous blockhead to intrude himself into the highest dignities, to intimidate humble merit, and to deter every one from attempting to reduce him to his proper station.

This experience teaches the most useless and perverted geniuses, men without any talents and real knowledge, boasters and adventurers, to render themselves necessary to the gréat. It is generally the only means by which the learned, the musician and painter acquire fame.

Emboldened by this experience, the foreign artist frequently charges hundreds for a piece which a native would execute ten times better for half the sum. The works of the foreign artist are, however, the rage; he cannot satisfy all the demands of his numerous customers, and at last, employs natives to work for him, and sells the produce of inland industry at a high price by stamping them with his name.

Animated by this experience the author contrives to obtain a favourable criticism on his work, pretending in the preface to his tiresome composition with barfaced impudence, to have been pressed by connoisseurs and men of erudition, of whose approbation and friendship he boasts, to publish his book for the benefit of the world.

This experience encourages the titled spendthrift who is on the verge of bankruptcy, and wants to borrow money which he does not intend ever to repay, to demand it in terms and

in a manner which lead the rich usurer to think it an honour to be cheated by him.

Almost all sorts of application for protection or preferment, made in that tone, meet with success, and are but rarely refused; whereas scorn, neglect and disappointment generally are the reward of the humble and timid client.

This experience teaches the servant to obtain authority with his master; and persons who receive kindness, to render themselves so important to their benefactors as to lead them to think themselves very fortunate for being able to serve *such* men. In short, the maxim that *our pretensions generally are the standard by which the world judges of our abilities and merits* is the great panacea, the philosopher's stone of all adventurers, boasters, impostors, quacks, and shallow-brained geniuses, which enables them to make their fortune.—I would therefore not give a pin for that specific.—But, stop! Should that maxim really be of no use at all to an honest man? Yes, my friends, we may turn it to some advantage. It teaches us never to reveal our æconomical, physical, moral and intellectual weakness, unless we are pressed by our calling or the most urgent necessity. Although we ought on no account to have recourse

to impudent lies, yet we must neglect no opportunity to shew ourselves as much to advantage as truth and probity will permit. We must, however, not do this in too gross, visible, striking and vain a manner, lest we should lose thereby more than we can gain. We rather ought to lead others, imperceptibly, to think that we possess more abilities and merits than appear at first sight. If we hang out too showy a sign, we excite too much attention, and invite others to explore those defects from which no son of Eve is exempted, and thus our fame may receive a mortal blow at once. Appear therefore with a certain modest consciousness of your innate dignity, and above all things let your countenance bespeak your internal sense of veracity and rectitude. Display sound reason and knowledge whenever an opportunity offers; but be careful not to betray as much as might provoke envy, or render you suspected of too high pretensions, nor as little as might induce others to overlook or to contradict you with impudence. Be reserved; but take care to avoid the appearance of singularity, timidity and pride.

§ II. STRIVE to render yourself perfect; but avoid the *appearance* of perfection and infallibility. The world judges of you by your preten



sions; and you have even to congratulate yourself if it imputes none to you which you never had; otherwise the least fault which you commit will induce people to exclaim: "Ah, it is unpardonable in *such* a man!" and as people of a weak understanding generally rejoice at the discovery of a defect in a man who outshines them, they will censure you with more acrimony for a single *slip* than they would another for a whole train of follies and roguery.

§ III. BE however not *too much* the slave of the opinion which others form of you. Be self-consistent! What need have you to care for the censure of the world if you act as you ought to do? Your whole wardrobe of external virtues is not worth a pin, if you conceal a weak and mean heart under that tinsel dress, and put it on only to make a show with it in companies.

§ IV. ABOVE all things take care not to lose your confidence in yourself, your trust in God, in good men and fortune. You will be forsaken by all your friends as soon as your countenance bespeaks dissatisfaction and despair. I must however observe, that the unfortunate frequently is unjust to men, and but too apt to misinterpret every ill-humour, every little mark of coldness in others, because he imagines that every



one sees that he suffers and wishes to avoid the application which he might make for his assistance.

§ V. PUT not to your own account what you owe to the merits of others. If you receive civilities or are distinguished in company, because you are connected with some great and respectable man, be not proud of it; but be modest enough to feel that, perhaps, you would be treated differently if it were not for him, and strive to be honoured for your own sake. It is by far more preferable to shine in a dark corner with our own light than as a great moon of a foreign sun, or as a satellite of a planet.

§ VI. DISCLOSE your sorrows and disasters if you are unfortunate or in want, and if reason, principles and your own exertions are insufficient to dispel your cares, to no person, not even to the wife of your bosom, unless you are certain to find relief. Few only are able and willing to ease our burden; the greater part make it only heavier; nay, many will shun you if they see that Fortune frowns at you; and all will desert you if they perceive that you are entirely destitute of resources, that you are deprived of all support, and have not one protector left! For who has the courage to take

singly and firmly the part of a man who is deserted by all the world? Who has the spirit to say: "I know the man, he is my friend, and worth more than all the wretches that censure and asperse him." And if you fortunately should meet with such a friend in time of need, he will, perhaps, be a sufferer himself, an unfortunate being that is urged by despair to unite his fate with yours, and whose protection will do you more harm than good.

§ VII. BUT speak also not too loudly of your prosperity, nor display too much splendour, wealth and genius. There are but few who will behold such a superiority without murmuring and envy. I would advise you, for the same reason, not to be too kind to others; because men are generally but too prone to shun an over-generous benefactor, as we are used to flee from a creditor whom we never can pay. Be therefore careful not to appear too great in the eyes of your brethren; for, besides, they will demand too much of you, and a single refusal will make them forget in a moment thousands of benefactions which they have received from you.

§ VIII. DISCLOSE never in an ungenerous manner the defects of your neighbour, in order

to sound your own praise at his expence ; nor expose the failings of others to shine with additional lustre.

§ IX. BE less eager to shine in companies than to afford others an opportunity of appearing to advantage, if you wish to please and to be applauded. But few people can bear to see others display their superiority. They will rather forgive us an ambiguous action, nay even a crime, than a deed through which we eclipse them. But when you are at some distance from them, and do not square their compass of activity, they will, perhaps, do you justice. I have frequently obtained the reputation of being a witty and sensible man in companies in which I had not uttered a single reasonable sentence, and in which I had done nothing else but to listen with an exemplary patience to fashionable and half-learned nonsense, or to introduce a subject of which one of the society was desirous to speak. Many people do me the unmerited honour to introduce themselves to me with the humble assurance, (at which I sometimes can not help smiling,) that they come to pay me their respect as a celebrated author ; they sit down, begin to talk, giving me scarcely room to speak a word, though they came to admire

me, and leave me delighted with my instructive and agreeable conversation and charmed with me in the highest degree, because I had understanding enough to *listen to them*.

Have patience with all weaknesses of that kind ; and if, for instance, a person should introduce a story or an agreeable anecdote which he *likes* to relate, let him not perceive in an unpleasant manner that the subject is tiresome to you, because you have heard it repeated frequently, or communicated it to him yourself. What can be more innocent than to promote effusions of that sort if we can obtain by it a good name, and afford pleasure to others ?

If people have an innocent hobby-horse, and, for instance, are fond of talking of their hounds, horses, paintings, &c. &c. or are pleased when we drink a glass of wine with them, then let us indulge them in these harmless fancies if we **can** do it without inconvenience and deceit. I have never been able to reconcile myself to the custom of those courtiers that are used to listen to every one with an affected attention, nay even to interrupt us in the middle of a sentence which they have occasioned themselves.

§ X. PRESENCE of mind is a rare gift of Heaven, and enables us to appear very much to

advantage in Social Life. This valuable jewel can however not be acquired by art : yet if we are in want of it, we may at least do something to repair that defect by being constantly on our guard, and taking care not to be too precipitate in conversation, nor to utter any thing that might perplex ourselves or others. Very lively dispositions ought to be particularly careful to observe this rule. I would advise those that are not gifted with much presence of mind, if an unexpected question should be put to them or an uncommon object or incident surprise them, to be silent for a few moments, and to give their consideration room for preparing them for the party which they ought to take. As a single, rash and imprudent word or a step taken in the hurry of perplexity, may be attended with fruitless regret and dangerous consequences, a bold resolution, taken and executed on the spot, may also, in critical moments, in which we frequently are thrown off our guard, be productive of safety, happiness and consolation.

§ XI. If you wish for temporal advantages, for support and employment in civil life; if you desire to obtain some post in which you can be useful to your country you must solicit, nay even frequently *beg* for it. Do not expect that

men will assist you of their own accord if you are not absolutely necessary to them, or interest themselves in your behalf without being solicited, although your deeds should speak loudly for you, and your want of assistance be generally known. Every one takes care of himself and his family without troubling himself about the modest man, who is too timid to appeal to his talents, and may starve in an obscure corner notwithstanding his superior talents and merits. For this reason many a worthy man remains in obscurity all his life, and has no opportunity to be useful to his fellow-citizens because he can neither beg nor cringe.

§ XII. BUT let us request and accept of others as few services as possible. We meet very rarely with people who are disinterested enough not to demand, sooner or later, great returns for small services; and this destroys the freedom of conversation, deprives us of the liberty of action, and limits our choice. Although this should in ten instances distress us scarcely once, yet it will be prudent to avoid that one possible instance, and rather to give as often as we can and to serve every one than to accept services or any thing else from others. There are also few people that will serve you with a good grace.



You will be convinced of it if you will make a trial. Many of your acquaintances will assume at once a grave and solemn air, in the highest glee of good humour, if you address them with these or similar words : “ I have a great favour to beg of you ; I am sadly distressed.” Men are however very ready to offer us services of which we are not in want, or even which they are not capable to afford us. The spendthrift is always ready to serve others with money, and the blockhead with advice.

Above all things be careful not to request any favour of a person if you are convinced that he cannot well give you a refusal, how unwilling soever he should be to oblige you ; for instance, when he is under obligations to you, or depends upon you in any other manner.

To receive benefactions makes us dependent on others, and we cannot know what the consequences of it may be. It reduces us frequently to the necessity either of shewing too much indulgence to bad men, or renders us suspected of being ungrateful.

If you wish to render yourself independent on the assistance of others you need but to have few wants, to be sober, regular and moderate in your wishes ; if, on the contrary, your

heart is a wrestling-place of numerous wild passions, if your mind is constantly agitated either by ambition or thirst after gain, or perturbed by voluptuous desires ; if you are infected by the extravagance and luxury of our age, and wish for every thing that dazzles your eyes ; if restless curiosity and a turbulent spirit impel you incessantly to interfere with the concerns of others, you will always be in want of the assistance of your friends and acquaintances in order to obtain the gratification of your numberless wishes.

§ XIII. WHEN I recommend to my readers rather to *oblige* every one than to accept of the *assistance* of others, this does not contradict the assertion that prudence requires we should not do *too much* for others. I would advise you in general to be obliging, but not to obtrude your services upon others, nor to be the friend and confident of *every one*. Above all things do not *censure*, correct, or advise others, if you have no urgent calling to do it. Few only will thank you for it, and many have already decided how to act when they apply for our advice. Do not trouble your friends and acquaintances with trifling commissions if you possibly can avoid it ; for instance, to buy something for you, to



deliver a message, &c. &c. I would also recommend to you to decline every charge of that sort ; for the execution of such commissions is generally attended with loss of time, and you will rarely be able to execute them to the satisfaction of your friends. They are generally attended with loss of time and money, and rarely gratefully acknowledged. Be also careful not to interfere in domestic disputes: and above all things be cautious how you reconcile enemies and settle differences, if the dissenting parties are not particularly dear to you, because both parties generally shake hands unexpectedly to attack the peace-maker jointly. Match-making leave to Heaven and a certain class of old women.

§ XIV. No rule is more generally useful, none ought to be observed more sacredly, and tends more to procure us respect and friends than that which teaches us to keep our word rigidly even in the most trifling instances, to be faithful to all our promises, and never to wander from the strait road of truth and veracity. You are intitled in no instance and by no motive whatever to say the contrary of what you think, although it would frequently be highly wrong and imprudent to disclose every thought of your

heart. No necessity, how imperious soever it be, can excuse an untruth ; no breach of veracity has ever been committed without having produced, sooner or later, painful consequences ; whereas the man who is known to be a slave to his word, and never to indulge himself with the commission of an untruth, gains confidence, a good name and general regard.

§ XV. BE strict, punctual, regular, assiduous and diligent in your calling. Keep your papers, keys and every thing in such an order as to be able to find every individual article in the dark. Bestow a still more rigid care upon the property of others which is entrusted to you. Never lend books to others which you have borrowed. If any be lent to you, send or carry them back in proper time, and do not give your friends or servants the trouble to fetch them. Every one is glad to be connected and to transact business with a person upon whose punctuality in words and deeds we can rely. Appear punctually at the place to which you have promised to come, though you should be the only one that is so regular ; good and bad examples of that sort are generally imitated, and the irregularity of others is no excuse for ours.

§ XVI. INTEREST yourself for others if you wish them to interest themselves for you. A person that is destitute of fellow-feeling, of a sense for friendship, benevolence and love, and lives merely for himself, will also be left to *shift* for himself when he wants the assistance of others.

§ XVII. IMPLICATE no one in your private differences, and demand not of those with whom you are connected to take a part in the animosities which exist between yourself and others.

A great number of such rules are comprehended in the old maxim: "Put yourself in your imagination frequently in the place of others, and ask yourself—How should you be pleased in such a situation—if *this* were demanded of you—if *you* were treated in such a manner—if *you* were desired to take so much pains—to afford such an assistance—or to give *such* an explanation?"

§ XVIII. Do not trouble yourself about the actions of others while they have no relation to yourself, or so much influence on morality as would render it criminal to be silent. What is it to you whether a person walks slow or quick, sleeps little or much, is often or seldom at home,

wears a simple or a sumptuous dress, drinks wine or beer, contracts debts or hoards up money, keeps a mistress or no? But *facts* which we *must* know we learn frequently best of stupid people, because they relate them without witty exaggerations and additions, without passion and artful misrepresentation.

§ XIX. Do never desert your *principles* while you are convinced that they are just. To make exceptions is very dangerous and leads farther than we at first intend to go, from trifles to matters of importance. If, therefore, you have resolved once after mature consideration to lend out no book, to drink no more than a certain quantity of wine, &c. &c. your own father even must not be capable to persuade you to decline from it, while the motives which determined your first resolution continue to remain in force. Be firm, but cautious not to take a resolution until you have considered all possible cases, nor to persist obstinately in trifles.

Above all things be always consistent. Form a certain plan of life and do not swerve from it the breadth of a hair, although that plan should be rather singular. People will perhaps talk a short time of your singularity, but finally be silent, refrain from disturbing you any further

and esteem you for your firmness. We in general are always gainers by a regular perseverance and a wise firmness. Principles resemble in one point all other materials of which something is made ; namely, the best proof of their goodness consists in their durability; and, in truth, when we minutely inquire into the reasons from which even the noblest actions of some people frequently are under-rated, we find oftentimes that the Public suspects the object and tendency of these actions, because they do not seem to accord with the system of the man that performs them, because they are inconsistent with his usual mode of proceeding.

§ XX. ABOVE all things strive to have always a good conscience. Avoid most studiously to give your heart the least occasion to reproach you on account of the object of your actions and of the means which you employ to attain it. Pursue never crooked ways and you may firmly rely upon good consequences, the assistance of God and of good men in time of need. Although you should be thwarted for some time by misfortune, yet the blissful consciousness of the goodness of your heart and of the rectitude of your designs will afford you uncommon strength and comfort ; your sorrowful countenance will

interest those with whom you converse much more than the grimaces of the smiling and grinning villain who *seems* to be happy.

§ XXI. BE *consistent* in your conduct, whatever the part be which you have undertaken to act. Be not warm, civil and obliging, pleasant and entertaining to-day, and cool, rude, dry and mute as a statue to-morrow! It is difficult and disagreeable to converse with people of such a fickle disposition. When they are in good humour or no other person is with them who is of a higher rank, jocosier or a better flatterer than we are, they will receive us with marks of the most cordial and intimate friendship. We are charmed with their conduct, rely upon their kindness, and go a few days after to pay another visit to that agreeable man who was so extremely glad to see us, and invited us so kindly to come very often to his house. But how different is our reception! We are received with a chilling coldness and grave looks; our host leaves us in a corner, to amuse ourselves as well as we can, and replies only in monosyllables to our questions, because he is just surrounded with venal parasites who can flatter his passions better than we. I advise you to drop by degrees all connexions with such people, and if afterwards they



should be actuated by a transient whim to seek your company again, to receive them in return with serious dignity, and to steal imperceptibly out of their society.

§ XXII. MAKE some distinction in your external conduct towards those with whom you converse, and in the marks of attention which you show them. Do not shake hands with *every one*, nor press *all* your acquaintances without discrimination to your heart : for what will be left for the friend of your bosom or those whom you prefer, and who can rely upon your marks of friendship and esteem ? who can set any value upon them if you dispense them so lavishly ?

§ XXIII. THERE are two principal motives that ought to prevent us from being too communicative ; first, the fear of betraying our weakness and being abused ; and then the consideration that if we have used people once to be informed of all our concerns, they will at last expect to be made acquainted with every trifling step which we take, to know all our affairs and to be consulted on all occasions. On the other hand, we must also avoid being too reserved and close : because this might lead others to suspect something important or even dangerous

to be at the bottom of all our transactions, which would involve us in many disagreeable situations and render us objects of suspicion, particularly in foreign countries, on travels and many other occasions. Too much reserve can also hurt us very much in Social Life in general, and injure us even in the conversation with worthy friends.

§ XXIV. ATTEMPT never to render a person ridiculous in company how many defects soever he may have. If he be stupid, you will reap little honour from directing the shafts of your wit at him; should he however happen to be less stupid than you think, *you* may become the butt of *his* ridicule; if he be noble minded and gifted with a feeling heart you will hurt him; and should he be malicious and revengeful he will, perhaps, resent it sooner or later. And if the Public have but the least consideration for our opinion of others, we can easily injure a good man in civil life by ridiculing him in company, or depress a weak person so much as to extinguish every spark of ambition, and to destroy every budding talent in his soul, when we expose him to scorn and disgrace by unveiling his defects.

§ XXV. TERRIFY and teaze no person, not



even your most intimate friends, by false reports, vexatious jokes, nor by any thing that could reduce them to a momentary distress or uneasiness. There are so many really unpleasant, anxious and distressing moments in this world, that it is our fraternal duty to remove every thing that could add even as little as the weight of a grain of the balance to the load of real and imaginary evils. It is equally wrong and imprudent to give a friend out of merriment a momentary pleasure that soon passes away, by fictitious joyful intelligence. There are real acts of cruelty which do not season, but embitter the joys of Social Conversation. Prudence also advises you not to excite curiosity nor to torment people by unfinished sentences, but rather to be silent if you are not inclined to speak out. There are people who are used to give their friends such mysterious hints, as for instance: "I have heard very unpleasant things of you, but am not at liberty to communicate to you what I have been told." Such hints are of no use and create uneasiness.

We must in general perplex people as little as possible, and when some person is going to commit an imprudent action; for instance, to speak ill of a book whose author is present, or

to be put to the blush in any other manner, rather spare him that perplexity and endeavour to repair his blunder as well as we can ; and if any person through inattention should break or drop something, or commit any other trifling mistake, good breeding requires we should take no notice of it, at least not look at him with marks of dissatisfaction or astonishment, which would only increase his distress.

§ XXVI. ABOVE all things let us never forget that people want to be amused and entertained ; that even the most instructive conversation at last becomes irksome to many if it be not seasoned by occasional sallies of wit and good humour ; further, that nothing in the world appears to the generality wittier, wiser and more pleasant than what is said to their praise and flatters their vanity ; but that it also is beneath the dignity of a rational man to act the mean part of a jester, and unworthy of an honest man to flatter meanly. There is a certain medium which I wish to recommend to you. Every man has at least *one* good quality which we may praise without degrading ourselves ; and an encomium of that sort uttered by a man of understanding and judgment may become an impulse to strive at greater per-

fection. This hint will be sufficient for those that are inclined to understand me.

Display as much as you can an unruffled and serene countenance. Nothing is more charming and amiable than a certain jovial and cheerful disposition which emanates from the source of a guiltless heart that is not agitated by the tempests of warring and violent passions. A person that constantly hunts after witticisms and shows that he has *studied* to amuse the company, will please only for a short time and interest but a few; his Society will not be courted by those whose hearts pant after better conversation, and whose minds wish for *Socratic* entertainment.

A person who sets up for a dealer in witticisms and jokes not only exhausts himself soon and grows flat, but also experiences frequently the misfortune to offend his companions, if he be in a particular humour to open the treasures of his jocose trifles. Every meal to which he is invited, every civility that is shewn him, seems to be attended with the onerous condition to deserve that honour by a display of his jokes; and if ever he attempt to raise his tone to a higher strain and to introduce a serious subject, he is laughed at before he has finished his sen-

tence. True humour and genuine wit cannot be forced nor produced by art and mental toils ; but they are felt like the presence of a celestial being, creating pleasure, congenial warmth and secret awe. When you wish to display your wit you ought always to consider first in what company you are. A discourse which is very entertaining to people of a certain education, may appear very tedious and improper to others, and a humorous expression which is received well in a society composed of gentlemen may be very unseasonable in a circle of ladies.

§ XXVII. **QUIT** the society of no person without having told him something obliging or instructive, in a manner which does not offend his modesty nor has the appearance of being studied, that he may have no reason to think the hour lost which he has spent in your company, and be sensible that you interest yourself for him, that you are sincerely concerned for his happiness, and do not lavish your civilities indiscriminately upon every one that happens to come in your way. But do not misunderstand me ! I wish if possible to banish all idle talk from conversation, and to prevail upon my readers to be careful never to utter any thing

that neither is useful nor imparts *real* pleasure to him who must listen to you, and interests neither his head nor his heart. I do therefore not recommend to you the custom of those that distress all their acquaintances without intermission by empty compliments, flatteries and encomiums which admit of no reasonable reply. As for the rest, I do not think it improper to intermix our discourse sometimes with a well-meant expression of civility, or a merited and modest encomium that may serve as an incitement to the further pursuit of virtue. The subsequent example will more clearly elucidate my real principles with regard to this point: I once sat at the table of a friend between a beautiful, young and sensible lady, and a little deformed and ugly old maid. I committed the rudeness to converse during dinner only with the former, and to neglect the latter entirely. When the desert was served up the rudeness of my conduct suddenly struck me, and I now repaired the fault which I had committed, by a gross offence against sincerity and veracity. Turning myself towards my neglected neighbour, I mentioned an incident which had happened about twenty years since, and when she told me she did not recollect it I had the meanness to reply: "It

is no wonder, for then you must have been a child." The little deformed being was highly pleased at my thinking her so young, and that single word gained me her good opinion. She ought however to have despised me for that flattery. How easy would it have been for me to introduce a subject that could have interested her without nourishing her silly infatuation! and this would have been my duty; instead of which I neglected her entirely all the time while we were at dinner. That miserable flattery was undoubtedly a very unmanly and dishonourable expedient to make amends for my ungentleman-like neglect.

We may however sometimes give great offence to some people though we imagined what we said was very obliging. There are, for instance, persons who would take it very ill were we to assure them that they appear to be very good-natured, and others are offended if they are told that they have a very healthy look.

§ XXVIII. If you are desirous to gain lasting respect; if you wish to offend no one; to tire no person by your conversation; I advise you not to season your discourse constantly with aspersions, ridicule and backbiting, nor to use

yourself to the contemptible custom of jeering. This may please now and then, particularly in the circle of a certain class of people; but a man that constantly *labours* to amuse the company at the expense of other people, or of truth, will certainly be shunned and despised at last, and he deserves it; for a man of feeling and understanding will bear with the failings of others, as he must be sensible how much mischief sometimes a single ridicule may produce though no harm be meant. He also cannot but wish for more substantial and useful conversation and loathe gibing nonsense. Yet we use ourselves but too easily to that miserable custom in what they call the fashionable circles. I do however not mean to condemn *all* ridicule in general and at all times, nor to deny that many follies and absurdities can be counteracted best in *less familiar* circles by the lashes of fine, not too plain nor too personal, ridicule. Neither do I desire you to applaud every thing you see and hear, nor to excuse all faults; I rather must confess, that I always suspect people that affect to cover all defects of others with the cloak of charity. They are generally hypocrites who wish to bribe others by the honourable terms in which they *peak* of them, to



forget the injuries which they *commit* against those very persons : or they intend to prevail on us by such a conduct, to be equally indulgent to their own failings and defects.

§ XXIX. AVOID as much as possible to relate anecdotes, particularly such as place others in an unfavourable light, especially if they be founded merely on hearsay. They are frequently idle inventions, or have passed already through so many hands as to be greatly exaggerated or mutilated, and thus essentially altered. We can oftentimes seriously injure innocent and deserving people by the relation of such anecdotes, and more frequently involve ourselves in great difficulties.

§ XXX. BE careful not to carry stories from one house to another, nor to relate familiar table talks, family discourses and observations which you have made on the domestic concerns and life of people with whom you frequently converse. Although you should not be a *malicious* tale-bearer, yet such an officious garrulity would create mistrust and might occasion a great deal of animosity and disharmony.

§ XXXI. BE cautious how you censure and contradict others. There are few things in the world that have not at least two different sides.



Prejudices overdarken frequently the judgment even of a wise man, and it is difficult to form always a just idea of the situation of others. Be also particularly careful not to judge rashly of the actions of judicious men, unless your modesty tell you that you are wiser than those whom you censure. This internal sense of our own superiority is however always very suspicious. A wise man generally is more lively than another, has to combat more violent passions, cares little for the opinion of the multitude, and is less anxious than others to justify the purity of his motives. As for the rest, you will do well always to ask before you pronounce judgment upon others: "What good does that man do? Is he useful to his brethren? And if he be, you ought to forget the little passionate failings which he has, and which are hurtful to no one but himself, or at most cause only a trifling and transient harm.

Above all things do not presume to weigh scrupulously the motives by which others are actuated to do good. Such an account would perhaps frequently render your own deeds, even those that afford you the greatest satisfaction, very diminutive. The influence which an action has upon the happiness of the world,

ought always to be the standard by which we estimate its merits or demerits.

§ XXXII. TAKE heed not to tire the patience of your hearers by tedious and prolix discourses. A certain laconism,—if it do not degenerate into an affected mode of speaking only in sentences and aphorisms, or of weighing scrupulously every word—a certain laconism, *i. e.* the gift of saying much in few words, and of keeping the attention alive by the omission of unimportant details, and at other times the skill of rendering a trifling circumstance interesting by relating it in a lively manner—is the real art of social eloquence. I shall however speak of it more at large in another place, and now only advise you not to talk too much in general. Be parsimonious in dispensing your words and knowledge lest your store should be exhausted too soon, and you relate what you neither ought nor intended to disclose, which only will serve to render your discourse tedious and disagreeable. Let others also speak and contribute their share towards the general conversation. There are people who without perceiving it, monopolize every where the conversation, and were they in a company of more than fifty people would

nevertheless soon find means to be the only speakers in the room. Disagreeable as this must be to every company it is equally unpleasant and destroys no less the glee of Social Conversation, when on the other hand we see people of a different disposition standing mute and listening as if they were spies, catching every improper and imprudent word that escapes in the unsuspecting heat of conversation, as it should appear for some sinister and malicious purpose.

§ XXXIII. THERE are people in Social Life who are always ready to receive but never will give; who desire to be amused, instructed, served and applauded, paid and nursed as it were by the rest of the Public, without giving any thing in return; who complain of being tired to death by the dulness of their companions, but do not consider that others have just reason to retort the same complaint against themselves; who will sit quietly upon their chair, listening with pleasure to the sallies and exhilarating discourses of others, without taking the trouble to contribute any thing to the amusement of the company. This is however as unjust as it is tiresome. There are also many who constantly are speaking only of their

own person, of their domestic concerns, their relations, deeds and official occupations; who turn every subject that is brought upon the carpet into that channel, and take every simile, every idea which they start from these things. Avoid as much as possible to display in mixed companies the shape, and to speak in the tone which you have received by your special education, your profession and station in life. Do not speak of subjects that can be interesting to no one but yourself. Make no allusion to anecdotes which are unknown to the company in which you are, nor to passages from books which they probably never have read. Converse not in a foreign language if you have reason to believe that not all those who are present understand it. Learn to accommodate yourself to the tone of the Society in which you are. Nothing can be more absurd than if, for instance, the physician entertain a groupe of young ladies with a description of his collection of anatomical preparations; if the divine in a circle of men of the world enter into a prolix discussion of some casuistical point in theology, and the old and infirm literati entertain a young coquette with an enumeration of his corns and sores.

We happen however frequently to come into companies where it is extremely difficult to introduce an interesting subject. If a sensible man be surrounded by people that have no taste for discourses of a better sort and relish only idle and trifling talk, it is no fault of his if he be not understood, and he may console himself with the consciousness of having spoken of matters that *ought* to interest.

§ XXXIV. SPEAK therefore not too much of yourself when you are not in a circle of intimate friends that interest themselves warmly in all your concerns ; and even then you will do well to avoid all egotism. Take care not to speak too much of yourself if your friends out of civility should turn the conversation upon your person, your publications and similar subjects. Modesty is one of the most amiable qualities, and pleases the more the more rarely it is to be met with in our times. Be therefore also not too eager to read your literary compositions to people without being asked to recite them, to display your talents and to relate your meritorious actions, nor to give others an opportunity to request it of you. I would also advise you not to *distress* others by your conversation, *i. e.* not to display such a superiority

as to render your companions mute, or to place them in a disadvantageous light.

2 § XXXV. Do not contradict yourself in conversation by supporting some principle or other which you have combated on a former occasion. We may change our opinions, but prudence requires we should not judge decisively in company, until we have weighed all the arguments for and against the point in question.

§ XXXVI. TAKE care not to expose yourself on every occasion from want of memory or attention to yourself, because you are in love with your own wit, by relating the same stories, anecdotes, similes, &c. &c. on every occasion. It is in general, but particularly in Social Conversation, highly important that we should sharpen our memory, and for that reason not use ourselves too much to write down every thing we wish to recollect.

§ XXXVII. Do not season your discourses with duplicities, nor with allusions to objects that either create aversion or make chastity blush : nor applaud those that do it. No sensible man can relish such discourses. Deny no where your sense of shame and chastity and your aversion from obscenity, though the company should consist only of men.



§ XXXVIII. INTERMIX not your discourses with flat common place expressions. Avoid, for instance, the hacknied assertion ‘that health is an invaluable treasure;’ ‘that skaiting is a cold amusement;’ ‘that every one is his nearest neighbour;’ ‘that all is well that ends well;’ ‘that a burnt child fears the fire;’ or ‘that time passes swiftly away,’ which *en passant* is not true; for as time is computed after a fixed standard it cannot pass quicker than it must do; and a person to whom one year appears to have passed more rapidly than another, must have slept more than usual or not have been in his senses; such sentences are tiresome and frequently nonsensical and void of truth.

There are some mechanical people one half of whose discourses are composed of certain expressions which they utter without thinking. They find you for instance dangerously ill in your bed and ‘rejoice to see you well.’ If you shew them your picture, ‘that it is indeed an excellent likeness but painted much too old.’ They will say of all children ‘that they are very big for their age, and very like their father or mother,’ &c. &c.

§ XXXIX. Do not teaze those with whom you converse with useless questions. There

are people who being used to shape all their discourses in the form of question and answer, assail us with such a number of interrogatives as to render it impossible for us to converse with them after our own manner.

§ XL. LEARN to brook contradiction. Be not childishly fond of your own opinions. Do not grow passionate and rude in disputing, not even when your serious arguments are opposed by ridicule and jeering. You have lost half, however good your cause may be, if you lose your equanimity; at least you will not be able to convince your opponent.

§ XLI. TALK not of your domestic concerns, nor of vexatious subjects in the playhouse, in concerts and other places of amusement. We resort to these places to divert and to rest ourselves, to forget the cares and troubles of life and to unbend our mind, it is therefore highly improper to obtrude our diurnal yoke again upon our shoulders.

§ XLII. I THINK you will agree with me that no honest and sensible man will scoff at essential doctrines of religion, though he should be so unfortunate as to question their truth; but I must observe that it would be equally improper to ridicule in company religious rites, cere-



monies that are held by many to be material parts of religion, or human institutions which some sects esteem as articles of faith. You ought to respect what is sacred to others, and to suffer your brethren to enjoy the same liberty which you claim for yourself. Do not forget that what *we* call mental illumination may be *darkness* to others. Spare prejudices that afford peace to your weaker brethren. Rob no one without giving him something better for what you take from him. Recollect always that ridicule never can *convince* others; that our reason which in this sublunary world labours under many impediments can easily err in such important matters; that it is difficult to overturn a defective system, which however is the basis of a good moral edifice, without pulling down at the same time the whole fabric; and finally, that such subjects are unfit for being discussed at all in mixed companies. I think however that in our age we avoid but too studiously and anxiously all opportunities of speaking of religion. Some people are ashamed to evince a warm regard for divine worship from fear of being taxed with want of mental light, and others affect to be animated with religious sentiments, and are anxious to avoid speaking

against fanaticism in order to ingratiate themselves with the devotees. The former is the most contemptible sort of cowardice, and the latter mean hypocrisy: either are equally unbecoming an honest man.

§ XLIII. WHENEVER you speak of bodily, mental, moral or other defects, or relate anecdotes that place certain principles in a ridiculous light, or reflect some blame upon certain ranks in life; then be cautious to ascertain first that no one is present who could be offended by it, or take that censure or ridicule as a reflection upon himself, or his relations and friends.

Ridicule the person, shape and features of no one; for it is not in the power of any mortal to alter them.

Nothing is more distressing, grievous and revolting to a man who unfortunately has a singular countenance or figure than to perceive that it is an object of ridicule or surprise. People that are acquainted with the world and have lived amongst men of all forms and shapes ought certainly not to be in want of being told of it; but, alas! we find even amongst people of the first quality, particularly amongst the female part, persons who have so little command over themselves or such indifferent

notions of decorum and equity, as not to be able to conceal the impression which an uncommon sight of that sort produces upon them. This is however a mark of great weakness; and besides if we consider how relative our notions of beauty and deformity are, how precarious our physiognomical knowledge is, and how often a beautiful, noble, warm and generous heart, and a great, well informed and philosophical mind, is the inhabitant of an apparently ugly form; we may justly conclude how little we are intitled to draw injurious inferences from the external appearance of a man, and that it is always extremely wrong to betray the impression which such a sight produces upon us through laughter, or in any other manner. There are also other objects besides a singular shape that frequently strike us; as for instance, ridiculous, fantastical and absurd miens, manners, distortions of the body, an imprudent and improper conduct, a singular and grotesque dress, &c. &c. Good breeding requires also of us not to express our astonishment at these singularities by sarcastic smiles or signs to those that are present, and thus to increase the confusion of the poor man that is guilty of them.

§ XLIV. IF you wish to speak to your friend in company of a person that is present, (though whispering is in general highly improper), take at least the precaution not to look or to point at the man of whom you are going to speak : and if you are to listen to a discourse concerning yourself which is carried on at some distance from you, prudence requires you should not turn your looks that way ; for this will put the speakers upon their guard, and we hear besides with the ears only and not with the eyes.

§ XLV. BE careful not to remind people with whom you converse of disagreeable matters without having a necessity to do it. Many persons are actuated by an imprudent concern, to inquire after the state of our œconomical and other disagreeable circumstances, although they can be of no service to us, and thus force us constantly to ruminate in societies where we expected to be exhilarated upon matters which we are anxious to forget. Such a conduct is extremely improper, imprudent and cruel, if we be not certain that discourses of that sort rather will ease and comfort the person to whom we address them than encrease his sufferings and sorrows.

Refrain also from prejudicing people against

any thing which they have once in their possession and are not at liberty to give up again, and do not render your connexions dissatisfied with their situation by disagreeable representations of its disadvantages. There are, alas ! but too many preachers of truth of that class who make it their business to reason the most happy and innocent prejudices away, and thus rob their brethren frequently of the only comfort which they have. This is indeed highly unbecoming a man who possesses a feeling mind, and besides can do no good, but rather be productive of the most lamentable consequences.

§ XLVI. WHEN a person tells disagreeable things to another or puts him to the blush, do not take a share in it nor seem to approve of it by applauding smiles, but rather pretend not to hear it. The nobleness of such a conduct is felt and frequently gratefully rewarded.

§ XLVII. I SHALL treat of the custom of speaking in paradoxes, of the spirit of contrasting and disputing, and of quoting the opinion of others, in a succeeding chapter of the second volume, to which I refer my readers.

§ XLVIII. SECRECY is one of the cardinal virtues in human life, but, alas ! more rarely

to be met with every day. Men are in our times so uncommonly fraudulent in their promises, nay even in the most solemn assurances and oaths, as to betray without hesitation secrets that have been intrusted to them under the seal of the most inviolable secrecy. People of another class who are less void of conscientiousness but extremely heedless, cannot bridle their loquacity on any account. They forget that they have been desired to be silent, and reveal out of an unpardonable imprudence the most important secrets of their friends in public places; or supposing every one whom they happen to meet to be a faithful friend, communicate what they ought not to regard as their property to people that are as thoughtless as themselves. Persons of this description are equally heedless with regard to their own secrets, plans and concerns, and thus destroy frequently their temporal happiness and ruin their best designs.

It is obvious how much injury in general must arise from such an imprudent disclosure of our own secrets and those of others. But there are also many other things which properly are no secrets, of which reason however teaches us that it would be better to conceal than to

divulge them, because the communication of them can be useful and instructive to no one, and become hurtful to some person or other. I recommend therefore a prudent reservedness, which however must not degenerate into a ridiculous mysteriousness. I must observe on this occasion that people in general are more reserved in despotic states than in countries which enjoy more liberty. In the former fear and mistrust tie the tongue, and in the latter every one follows the impulse of his heart to communicate his ideas without restraint.

If we cannot avoid intrusting several people at one time with the same secret, it will be prudent we should enjoin the strictest secrecy to every one of them, to lead each of them to think that he is the sole possessor and will be alone accountable for the keeping of it.

Many people are in the habit of not explaining themselves distinctly and give no absolute promise when requested by us to preserve a secret which we are going to disclose to them. Good nature prevents us frequently in such a case to trust to their discretion. Such an ambiguous conduct is however unbecoming a real gentleman; an honest man declares his intention without reserve, and listens not to a dis-



closure of that nature until he has informed us how far he can engage himself to keep the secret which we are going to communicate to him.

✓ § XLIX. WHAT the French call *contenance*, harmony and consistency in our external conduct, equanimity, abstinence from all violence, from all passionate heat and precipitation ought to be a particular object of the study of people of a violent temper.

The art of expressing ourselves concisely, clearly and with energy, without circumlocution and with warmth, and of accommodating ourselves to the capacities of those with whom we converse so as not to tire them : the gift of relating well and with humour, without laughing at our own sallies, of representing our object drily or in a smiling shape, in a serious or a comical garment and in its natural colours, is a great talent which can be acquired only by study and close application. If we aim at some perfection in this great art we must study our person, have a proper command over our countenance, guard against all unnatural distortions of the face, and if we know that certain gestures give our form a disagreeable appearance, endeavour to avoid them as much as possible.



Our port and gestures must be noble. It is therefore highly improper to put our head, arms, and all other limbs in motion like people of the lowest class, when we speak of unimportant and uninteresting subjects. When we converse with others we ought to look at them mildly and modestly in the face, and to avoid carefully to play with the buttons of our coat or any thing else. In short, every thing that bespeaks a polite education and attention to ourselves is required if our conversation be to please, and it is highly important we should not indulge ourselves in these apparently trifling matters, and observe every rule of the strictest decorum, even in the circle of our family, in order to render those things natural and habitual to us which we so frequently neglect, and which appear to us to be an onerous restraint if we accustom ourselves to disregard them. It would lead me too far beyond the limits of this work were I to enlarge more minutely here on *this* point; I shall therefore only remark in general that it is highly improper to interrupt others when they are speaking; that civility requires we should take the plate which our neighbour offers to us at table, though we should not incline to eat any of the viands that are upon it, and to give

it farther in order to save him the trouble to hold it longer in his hands on our account ; to turn our back as little as possible to other people ; to be careful to commit no mistakes in names and titles ; when we are walking with people who are punctilious, to let him that is superior to us always go on the right side, or in the middle if there be three together ; to open the window a little or at least to make a movement as if we were going to do so, when some person passes our house and salutes us ; that we ought to observe the same rule when we are in a coach ; that we should not stare impudently at those with whom we converse, but look open and free in their face, have a proper command over our voice, not halloo, and yet speak distinctly, preserve a certain dignity in our gait, and not take the lead of the conversation in all companies ; that when we are walking with a lady we must offer her our left arm if she do not walk conveniently on the right side ; that on steep stairs we must let the ladies go before us in descending, but in ascending walk before them ; that when people do not comprehend us and we foresee that a more minute explanation would be of no use, or when the subject is of so little importance as

'not to deserve a great expenditure of words we ought to give up our point; that people of rank if they be biassed by prejudices will be offended if one who is inferior to them mention their name along with his own, as for instance, "*We* have won yesterday at play:" for they require to be treated as if they alone were worth mentioning; that it is improper in company to whisper in the ear of our neighbour, to lean our head upon our hands at table, or to make antick faces; that it is a breach of good breeding to spoil an innocent joke in company, for instance, when a person exhibits tricks with cards and we know the manner of proceeding, to expose him; that it is improper to return a toothpick to the person who obliged us with it after having used it; that we ought not to call people ten times back to inform them of numerous trifles which we forgot to mention when they parted with us at the door or in the street; that it is a very unbecoming custom to have always something between our fingers or in our mouth with which we amuse ourselves while we are in conversation with others; that we first ought to beg leave when we want to read a letter or to do any thing else of that nature in the presence of others; that when

we pass some person to whom we owe respect, propriety requires we should pull off our hat on the side which is opposite to that where he walks, lest we should touch him with it or prevent his seeing our face; that it is a breach of decorum to sit in an awkward posture at table, to make ridiculous faces, or to suffer a lady or a person who is our superior to assist others with viands from a dish that stands before us, &c. &c. People of a certain rank and such as have not had a very common education know these trifling rules from their infancy; I must however observe that a neglect of them is not looked upon as indifferent by many, and frequently can hurt us materially in the opinion of those on whom our fortune depends.

§ L. THERE are some more social improprieties and incongruities which we must avoid and which will appear to us in their proper light if we consider what the consequence would be, if every individual of the company in which we are were to take the same liberty; for instance, to sleep during sermon; to talk in a concert; to whisper into the ear of a friend behind the back of another, or to make signs to the former which the latter could apply to himself; to talk privately in company with a

friend ; to expose ourselves if we dance or play an instrument indifferently, and thus to excite the merriment of the company or to make them yawn ; when people want to make room for us, to run ten times in all directions against them as Yorick did to the Marchioness of S \* \* at Milan ; to play at cards although we know the game but indifferently, and thus to tire the patience of those that play against us, or to make our partners lose their money by our want of skill ; to hum the tune which we are dancing ; to stand in the playhouse, and thus to prevent those that sit behind us from seeing ; to come later into company, to leave it sooner, or to stay longer than the rest. Avoid all such improprieties ! Look not into the papers of others, nor stay alone in an apartment where money, notes or writings are on the table. If two persons who walk before you converse softly and cautiously with each other, you ought to make some noise to prevent all suspicion of being inclined to overhear them, and to spare them a disagreeable perplexity. Trifling as such marks of discretion may appear to some of my readers, yet they tend to render conversation pleasant and easy, and therefore ought to be attended to.

§ LI. WE are frequently tired and vexed at the tediousness and prolixity of those with whom we happen to converse. Reason, prudence and charity require we should exert all our patience on such occasions if we cannot avoid them, and not to betray our displeasure by rudeness and an insulting conduct. The more inane such a discourse, and the more talkative the person is who delivers it, the more are we at liberty to reflect upon other subjects. But suppose this should not be, we ought at least to recollect how many hours we dream away uselessly. We owe besides some sacrifice to the societies which we frequent, and should consider that we also frequently tire others by our discourses, however high our opinion may be of the importance of *our* deliveries.

§ LII. SOME people possess an innate facility of conversing with men, and a natural gift to form many new connections with the greatest ease, and to obtain the good opinion of others in a short time ; whereas others labour under a certain habitual timidity and bashfulness, of which they cannot divest themselves although they see daily new faces. This timidity is undoubtedly but too often the consequence of



an erroneous and defective education, and sometimes arises also from a secret vanity which renders them fearful not to appear to advantage. This fearfulness in the company of strangers seems to be constitutional with many people, and all their struggles to shake it off are fruitless. A certain reigning Prince who is one of the most deserving and sensible men whom I know, and who also has not the least reason to be bashful on account of his person, nor to fear his producing unfavourable impressions, has assured me, that although he was used from his infancy to see every day new faces and large companies, yet he could never step into his anti-chamber where his courtiers were assembled without being entirely blinded as it were for some moments. Yet that timidity leaves that amiable Prince as soon as he has collected himself a little, when he converses freely and kindly with every one, and starts better subjects than his brethren in general are apt to introduce on such occasions, when the weather, their dogs, horses and similar unimportant objects commonly are the sole theme of their discourses.

A certain ease in conversation and the gift to appear to advantage on the first interview, as well as to enter without restraint into conver-



sation with strangers, and to distinguish at first sight whom we have before us and what subject we ought to introduce, are therefore qualities which we cannot improve and cultivate too diligently. It is however to be wished that this might never degenerate into that sort of impudence and importunity which is so peculiar to adventurers, who sometimes contrive to learn in less than an hour's time the lives of a whole company, and are always ready to relate their own adventures; who do not blush to solicit without hesitation the friendship and the kind offices of every new acquaintance, or to offer their services and protection to people whom they see for the first time. The principal point in conversation is to be able to fall easily in with the tone which is new to us, and display and advance nothing in the circles to which we are introduced that is neither valued nor understood there.

§ LIII. It is therefore also necessary you should not take too great pretensions with you into all circles to which you are admitted. Prudence requires you should not expect to be looked upon as the chief person in all companies, to shine and to be distinguished, nor presume to desire that *all eyes* should be directed

exclusively at you, and all ears listen only to *your* conversation. If you disregard this advice you may be certain that you will imagine yourself to be neglected in all companies, act a pitiful part, become troublesome to yourself and others, flee the society of men and be shunned by them in return. I know many people of this description who, whenever they are to appear in an advantageous light, must be the centre around which the whole company moves; and there are also a great number who in Social Life can bear the society of no one that could be compared with them. They are excellent, noble, great, useful, beneficent and witty, when they are the only persons in company to whom we direct our discourse, requests, expectations and hopes; but little, mean, revengeful and weak as soon as they are to range themselves in rank and file, and destroy every edifice the building of which has not been superintended by themselves, nay even their own structure if another person have added a small ornament to it. This is an unhappy and unsociable disposition. If you wish to live happy yourself and to render others so, I would advise you in general to expect and to demand in this sublunary world as little as possible.

§ LIV. THUS much on external decorum and good manners ! I now shall add only a few words more on dress. Let your dress be neither above nor beneath your situation ; not above nor beneath your fortune ; not fantastical nor too gay, nor ostentatiously sumptuous, splendid and extravagant, but clean, decent and tasteful ; and if you *must* live sumptuously let your expenses be tributary to solidity and elegance. Distinguish yourself neither by an old-fashioned dress nor by imitating every modish foppery. Bestow a more than common attention to your attire when you must mix with the higher classes. We are distressed in company if we are conscious of appearing in an improper attire.

Never wear borrowed garments ; for this has the most noxious influence upon the character in more than one respect.

§ LV. If you ask ‘ whether it be better to go often or seldom in company,’ I must refer you to your own individual situation. The circumstances, wants, and many other trifling considerations of different persons may render either one or the other more advisable and eligible ; I must however make the general remark, that we ought never to intrude upon people nor to visit them too often ; and as we

cannot always please every one, that it is better our friends and acquaintances should ask us, 'why we see them so rarely?' than complain of our coming too often and intruding ourselves every where. We have a certain internal sense (if infatuation and presumption do not blind us) which tells us whether our visit be agreeable or not, and whether we may stay longer or ought to take our leave? The manner in which we are treated by the children and domestics is frequently a pretty unequivocal indication of the disposition of their parents and masters towards us.

As for the rest, I advise you to form as few *familiar* connections as possible; to select only a small circle of *friends*, and to be extremely careful how you extend it. Men are but too apt to abuse or to slight us if we become perfectly familiar with them. If we wish to live comfortably, we must in general remain *strangers* to others in some degree; for then they will spare and respect us, and court our society. On this account it is highly eligible to live in great cities where we every day can see other people. This is extremely pleasing to a man that is not timid amongst *strangers*; for then we hear frequently what we perhaps should not

have learnt if we had been known to the company. No person watches us and we can make many useful observations.

§ LVI. As for the rest, I advise you also for your own sake and that of others never to believe any society to be so entirely indifferent, or the discourse of any person so totally inane, as to render it impossible for you to learn at least something from it, or to derive from it matter for reflection.

Do not desire to meet in all companies with erudition and fine culture; but prefer, encourage and promote sound natural understanding and plain sense; afford those that are gifted with it opportunities to display and to exert it, and mix with people of all ranks, and you will acquire by degrees the tone and disposition of mind which time and circumstances will demand.

§ LVII. But with whom are we to converse most frequently? The solution of this query naturally must be modified by the particular situation of every individual. If we can choose, (which *en passant* is oftener the case than we think), it will always be advisable to select those for our companions that are wiser than ourselves, people of whom we can learn something useful, who do not flatter and are superior to

us. We prefer however but too frequently to assemble around us a circle of inferior geniuses, who whirl around us in obsequious gyration. as often as our superior mind is pleased to brandish its magical wand ; the consequence of which is that we always remain as we were, and never improve in wisdom and virtue. There are indeed situations in Social Life in which it is useful and instructive to mix with people of all capacities, nay, where it is our duty to converse not only with persons of whom *we* can learn something, but also with such as can derive instruction from *us*, and have no right to demand it ; but this condescension ought never to be carried so far as to endanger the account which we must give one time of the use of our life and of our duty to strive at greater perfection.

§ LVIII. THE tone that prevails in companies is frequently uncommonly singular and unaccountable. Prejudice, vanity, custom, authority, the desire of imitating others, and Heaven knows what more, frequently render that tone so peculiar, that sometimes people who live in the same place, meet and converse with each other year after year, and talk of subjects in such a manner as renders their con-



versation highly tiresome and tedious to the whole company and to every individual member of it. They believe however nevertheless to be obliged to submit to the inconvenience of continuing that sort of life without interruption. Can it be maintained with the least colour of truth that most fashionable circles afford only to a single member *real* pleasure? How often do we find scarcely ten persons amongst fifty that take up the cards who play from inclination? It is therefore highly ridiculous if free and independent people who live in small towns, or even in villages and could enjoy life in a rational manner, unshackled by the onerous fetters of fashion, bend their necks under that painful and cumbersome yoke in order to imitate the fashionable follies of the capital. If we have some influence over our neighbours and fellow-citizens, it is our duty to contribute as much as lies in our power to render that tone more rational. But if this should not be the case and we happen to drop singly into such a circle, it will be prudent in us not to encrease by an awkward, sullen or morose conduct, the uneasiness of the landlord and his guests, but rather to shew ourselves as masters of the art of talking much without saying anything, and to



claim at least the merit to fill up a vacancy which otherwise would have been occupied by slander.

In populous and large cities we are least observed and can live according to our inclination; for there we are under less restraint, less watched and controlled; our domestic concerns are less exposed to observation and censure; we may walk about unobserved, peaceably and undisturbed, transact our business and choose a mode of life as we think it most convenient. But in small towns we are doomed to keep a strict account with a number of frequently tiresome acquaintances, cousins, &c. &c. of the visits we are expected to pay and to receive, which generally begin at an early hour in the afternoon and last till ten or eleven o'clock at night, during which time the news from the capital, politics and similar edifying subjects are commonly the sole topics of conversation. This is undoubtedly highly painful to a man of sense; yet there are means of refining by degrees the tone of conversation in such places, or of prevailing upon the weak Public after we have been scandalized a few months, to suffer us to live in our own manner, if we are honest, humane, obliging and sociable. In villages and at our

country seats we may undoubtedly live most comfortable; and a person that is desirous to make a good use of his time and to contribute to the happiness of others, finds there numerous opportunities to be a benefactor of the most useful but too much neglected class: social pleasures are however more difficult to be procured in the country than in cities and towns. In those moments our heart is most in want of the society of some dear friend, the faithful partner in our joys and sorrows being perhaps many miles distant from us, unless we be rich enough to collect a whole army of friends around us; but this is also attended with many inconveniences, and very rich people feel besides this want but rarely. If you wish to live happy in the country, you must therefore learn the great art to relish and to discover the good qualities of those that happen to be about you, not to grow tired of simple pleasures, to husband them well, and to give them a pleasing variety.

Our conversation in the country is very apt to grow tiresome and insipid, because our wives, children and domestic friends are constantly about us. This may be remedied by a store of good books which afford new matter for conver-

sation, by an interesting correspondence with absent friends that are dear to us, and by a wise management of our time. No pleasure is sweeter in the country than that of meeting our little social circle in the evening of a well-spent day, after we have performed some useful business, either to take a walk, or to unbend our mind by cheerful conversation and innocent sports : but nothing is more dreadful than to see people in small towns or in the country, who must meet every day, constantly quarrel with each other, although they are not rich enough to be entirely independent. They render their existence miserable in the last degree. It is therefore highly important for people that reside in small towns or in the country, to be indulgent, obliging, pliant, circumspect and prudent in their conduct, and to observe a kind of coquetry in conversation, in order to prevent misunderstanding, disgust and aversion. But we have also no where more reason to be cautious with regard to our discourses and actions than in small towns, and such places where a narrow-minded tone prevails, because those that live there have little amusement, and frequently know of no other diversion than to repeat the story of every gossip and to meddle

with the affairs of their neighbours and acquaintances.

§ LIX. IN foreign countries we cannot be too circumspect in conversation from various considerations. It is always very necessary not to slight certain relations, whether we travel for the sake of instruction, or in political or economical concerns, or only to amuse ourselves. If we travel to gather instruction, we ought above all things to consider in what country we are, and whether we may speak of and inquire after every thing without exposing ourselves to danger or vexation. There are but too many states where the government severely punishes those that bring certain works of darkness to light. In such countries circumspection is highly necessary as well in our conversations and inquiries as in the choice of those with whom we form connections. On this occasion I must observe, that very few travellers have a right to trouble their head about the internal constitution of foreign countries; yet curiosity and a certain impulse of restless activity unites in our age large numbers, to collect in foreign hotels, inns and clubs dubious anecdotes for the composition of some indigested work, while they would have found at home sufficient

to do and to learn, if they really had the welfare of mankind as much at heart as they pretend. It is obvious that this precaution is doubly necessary when we have something to ask or to transact for our own benefit in a foreign place. As in such a case many eyes are directed at us, we must avoid all connection with people who being dissatisfied with the existing government are eager to throw themselves into the way of foreigners, because they have injured their character by their imprudent conduct, and thus deprived themselves of the means of obtaining civil advantages, which they however seem to scorn as the fox did the grapes. They seek to raise themselves a little in the opinion of their fellow-citizens by intruding themselves upon foreigners, attending them every where on their walks, and thus leading others to suppose that they have connections abroad. A foreigner who intends to stop only a few days at a place may without danger rove about at pleasure with these generally garrulous *Ciceronies*, who commonly are provided with a large store of jocular and scandalous tales and anecdotes: no man of sense will blame him for it. But a person that means to stay some time at a place and wishes to be introduced to politer circles, or has to transact business

of consequence, will do well to consult the opinion of the public in the choice of his connections.

Almost every town contains a party of such malcontents who are dissatisfied either with government or with the majority of their fellow-citizens. Do not associate with such people, nor choose your connections from among them. They either imagine they do not receive that attention to which they presume to be entitled, or are of a turbulent, calumniating, malevolent, artful, immoral and arrogant disposition. As they are shunned by their fellow-citizens for one or the other of these reasons, they establish among themselves an association which they endeavour to strengthen, by alluring people of understanding and probity by flattery and other despicable means. Avoid as much as possible all intercourse with such people, and every thing in general that breathes party spirit, if you wish to live comfortably.

§ LX. EPISTOLARY correspondence is a conversation carried on by letters; almost all the rules which we have given for social conversation may therefore be applied to our literary intercourse with others. Do therefore not extend your correspondence too much; for this answers no reasonable purpose, and is not only expen-



sive, but also will take away much of your time. Be as cautious in the choice of those with whom you cultivate a *familiar* correspondence as you ought to be in the selection of your daily companions. Take a firm resolution never to write a letter that contains not something that can be useful, or afford real pleasure to the person to whom it is directed. Circumspection is still more necessary in writing than in speaking. It is also highly important we should take proper care of the letters which we receive. It will scarcely be believed how much vexation, animosity and discord can arise from the neglect of this rule of prudence. A single irrevocable word written in a letter, a single slip of paper left carelessly upon the table or dropped by accident has frequently utterly ruined the peace of many persons, and destroyed the happiness of whole families. We can therefore not be too circumspect with regard to our letters and to writing in general. I repeat it, a heedless word which we *utter* is generally soon forgotten, but one that is *written* can produce the greatest mischief even after the lapse of many years.

Letters whose speedy and careful delivery is of some importance to you ought always to be sent by the regular post, and never to be trans-



mitted from motives of œconomy by travellers or enclosed to others, for we can rarely rely upon the punctuality of people in general.

Never read your letters if possible in the presence of others but always when you are by yourself; for the contrary is a breach of civility, and also may lead you to betray their contents by your change of countenance.

There are people particularly among the ladies, who trouble their friends and acquaintances that live with them in the same place on every trifling occasion with notes and penny-post letters, a custom which is extremely improper as it encroaches upon the time of many persons who know how to employ it to a better purpose, and are not at leisure to read and to answer every useless scrawl which is sent to them by idle people.

§ LXI. BELIEVE always that most people are not half so good as their friends represent them, nor half so bad as they are painted by their enemies, and you may be certain that you will derive many important benefits from it.

Judge not of men by their words but by their deeds, and choose for your observations those moments in which they do not suspect to be observed by you. Direct your attention to

their less important proceedings, but not to actions of great moment which generally are performed with more precaution and circumspection. Observe the humour which a healthy man displays when he awakes from sleep, and the disposition which he shews in the prior part of the day when body and soul appear in their morning dress. Endeavour to learn what sort of viands and beverage he likes best : whether he prefers very substantial and simple food or high seasoned and compound dishes ; observe his gait and port, whether he loves to walk by himself or prefers to lean upon the arm of another ; whether he walks in a strait line or crosses the way of his companion, runs against others and treads upon their feet ; whether he dislikes walking by himself and always must have a person to attend him ; whether he uses to consult his friends and acquaintances upon every trifle, and regulates his conduct after that of his neighbours and connections ; whether he immediately picks up what he has dropt, or leaves it upon the ground and takes it up only when it is most convenient to him ; whether he is used to interrupt the discourse of others, and monopolizes as it were the conversation ; whether he is fond of being mysterious, and accustomed to call people

aside to whisper trifling matters in their ear ; whether he is eager to decide in every matter that is brought upon the carpet, &c. &c. The hand-writing of people corresponds also frequently with their character. All children whose education I have superintended have learnt to shape their letters after the form of mine, but as soon as their disposition began to unfold itself every one added gradually some features of his own. At the first view their hand-writing seemed to be alike ; but upon more minute examination, I could discover laziness in the manner of one, and in that of others narrowness of soul, inconsistency, thoughtlessness, firmness, perverseness, regularity, or any other peculiarity. Collect all these observations carefully ; but be not so unjust as to judge of the whole character by a few of these and similar traits. Be not too partial to people that are more civil to you than others.

Beware to rely firmly upon the love and friendship of others, before you have proofs of their affection that have cost them some *sacrifice*. Most people that seem to be cordially devoted to us, shrink back as soon as occasion demands they should suppress their favourite inclination on our account. This is the real stand-

ard by which we can judge how we ought to value the attachment of others. It is no merit to do every thing in our power to oblige and to please a friend while we can do it conveniently; the real and only test of our sincere concern for his happiness, consists in our readiness to purchase his comfort even at the expence of our favourite propensities.

§ LXII. ALL these general and the subsequent special rules as well as many more which I must leave to the judgment of my readers, lest I should transgress the limits of this work, tend to render conversation easy and pleasant and to sweeten Social Life. But there may be some who perhaps have particular reasons to disregard one or the other of these rules, and in that case I think it but just to leave every one at liberty to promote his individual happiness in his own way. I shall obtrude my specifics upon no one. Those that wish neither for the favour of the great nor for general applause nor fame, that on account of their political or æconomical situation or from other reasons have no occasion to extend the circle of their acquaintances, and people who are compelled by old age or infirmity to shun social conversation, are not in want of these rules. We ought therefore to be

just enough to demand of no one that he should accommodate himself to our customs, but let him steer his own course; for as the happiness of every individual depends upon the notions which *he* entertains of it it would be cruel to attempt to compel any one to be happy contrary to his inclination. It is highly entertaining to observe how busy some empty headed geniuses sometimes are to deery a worthy man, who has no inclination to accommodate himself to the silly tone that prevails in their circles, and being perfectly satisfied with his secluded existence refuses to sacrifice his preeious time to the puerile whims of every fool. When we refuse to be *slaves* to society we offend very often those busy idlers who know of no other occupation than to go from their beds to the looking-glass, thence to dinner, from dinner to the card-table, and then to bed again. But this is extremely unjust, and we ought to blame no one for refusing to sacrifice his duty to sociability. To stay at home and to do what we *ought* to do and for which we are accountable, does indeed not deserve to be called a ridiculous singularity.

§ LXIII. BEFORE I point out the particular rules which we must observe in the conversation with men, I beg leave to make one more obser-

vation.—Did I write only or principally for *ladies*, I should have omitted or at least modified many of the rules which I have laid down and intend giving in the subsequent pages, or substituted others in their room which would be less useful to men. This however is not the scope of my book. Experienced and wise ladies alone can give to their sex the best rules for regulating their conduct properly in Social Life; this is a task in which a man would not succeed. If however the fair sex should find in this work some useful hints which they can apply to themselves it would be no small satisfaction to me. I only beg leave to observe here, that ladies are restrained by many considerations which do not concern our sex. They depend more than men upon the opinion of the world, and must be more cautious and reserved in their conduct. On one hand they are indulged with more inadvertencies than our sex, and on the other with more whims: their conduct begins sooner to influence their character, while boys and youths may be more heedless without injuring themselves in a material degree; their existence is (or at least ought to be) confined chiefly to their domestic circle, whereas the man is tied more firmly to the state by his situa-



tion. From this reason many virtues and vices, actions and omissions, produce entirely different consequences if they be committed by one sex than if chargeable upon the other.

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## CHAPTER II.

### *On the Conversation with Ourselves.*

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#### SECTION I.

THE duties which we have to observe towards ourselves are of the last importance, to converse with our own person can therefore neither be useless nor uninteresting. It is inexcusable in any man to live constantly abroad and to neglect his own society in order to converse with others, to flee as it were from himself, not to cultivate his own *Self*, and nevertheless to meddle uninterruptedly with the concerns of others. A man who makes it his daily occupation to live abroad becomes a stranger in his own house; a person that lives in a constant round of diversions becomes a stranger to his own heart, is compelled to strive to kill his internal weariness in the croud of idle people, loses all confidence



in himself and is in the greatest distress if ever he find himself *vis-a-vis* with himself. The man that frequents only those circles in which he is flattered, grows so averse from the voice of truth that at last he shuts his ears against it if it speak in his heart. If his conscience nevertheless continue to reproach him, he plunges into the bustle of society where that beneficial monitor is silenced.

§ II. TAKE therefore care not to neglect your sincerest friend, your own self, so as to make him turn his back on you when you are most in want of him : alas! there will be moments in which you dare not forsake yourself, though all the world should relinquish you, moments in which the conversation with your own self will be your only comfort. But what will become of you in such moments if you be at war with your own heart, if this last and only friend too deny you all kind of consolation and assistance?

§ III. BUT if you wish to find comfort, happiness and peace in conversing with your own self, you must display towards your own person as much prudence, honesty, propriety and justice as you ought to show in the society of others, and neither exasperate nor depress yourself by neglect, nor corrupt your heart by flattery.

§ IV. TAKE care of the health of your soul as well as of that of your body; but spoil neither the one nor the other by too much tenderness. The man that endangers his constitution by too much labour or excess, squanders away a treasure which frequently is alone sufficient to raise him above men and fate, and without which the wealth of all the world is not worth a pin. But he that dreads every breeze of air and is fearful to exert and to exercise his limbs, lives a nerveless life of constant anxiety, and attempts in vain to put the rusty springs in motion when he has occasion to exert his natural powers. A man that constantly exposes his mind to the tempests of passion, or incessantly crowds the sails of his spirit, either runs aground or must return with his leaky vessel into port, when the best season for making new discoveries sets in. But he that suffers the faculties of his understanding and memory constantly to sleep, or shudders at every little struggle or at any sort of painful exertion, enjoys not only very little of the sweets of life, but is also totally lost as soon as energy, courage and resolution is required.

• Take therefore care not to torment yourself by imaginary sufferings of the body or the soul; do not give way to every adverse incident or

corporeal affliction! Take courage and be resolute! All the storms of adversity are transient; all difficulties can be overcome by firmness of mind, and the remembrance of every loss can be exploded from the memory if we bend our attention upon some other object.

§ V. Have a proper regard for yourself if you wish to be esteemed by others. Do nothing secretly of which you would be ashamed if a stranger were to see it. Act well and properly, rather to preserve your regard for yourself than to please others. Do not indulge yourself with regard to your dress and appearance when you are alone. Do not walk about in a dirty, ragged and improper attire, nor slovenly and negligently when you are not observed. Preserve a proper sense of your internal dignity. Never lose your reliance upon yourself, and upon the consciousness of your value in the eyes of your Creator; and although you are sensible not to be as wise and capable as others, yet do not despair to come up with them; let not your zeal slacken, nor be wanting in probity of heart!

§ VI. Do not despair nor grow faint-hearted if you cannot attain that degree of moral or intellectual greatness at which an other has arrived, and be not so unjust as to overlook those

advantages which you perhaps have before him. But suppose this should not be the case, is it possible we all could be equally great? Resist the desire to rule or to act a conspicuous part. Alas! you do not know how dearly we often must pay for it. I am very sensible that it is extremely difficult to conquer the desire to become a great man; if we be firmly persuaded we are gifted with great abilities and possess internal merit, particularly if we live amongst a herd of nerveless beings who are destitute of mental and bodily energy, and see how little they value our worth, how little influence we have upon them, how little they are sensible of our superiority, and how arrogantly the most pitiful and the dullest geniuses, who attain the object of their presumptuous wishes without any exertion of their own, look down upon us. It is truly hard! You try all ways and means to obtain the reward due to your merits and to render yourself useful; but all your attempts are fruitless, and the state remains blind to your worth. You attempt to distinguish yourself by the superiour excellence of your domestic establishment; but your income is too small, and your wife does not support you properly; your spirit is depressed by domestic cares, and thus you are compelled to

keep in the common road; you perceive with pain that your abilities are doomed to lie dormant, and that the springs of your soul grow rusty from inactivity; but you cannot resolve to have recourse to the usual artifices to render yourself important, and to excite the attention of your cotemporaries by a pompous shew of your capacities; nor can you reconcile yourself to a life of obscurity and idleness. I confess your situation is truly painful and unfortunate: Yet do not despair; have confidence in yourself and trust to Providence! There exists a greatness which is independent on men, fate and the applause of the world; it consists in the internal consciousness of our merit and rectitude; and our sense of it grows stronger the less it is taken notice of.

§ VII. Be an agreeable companion to yourself: that is, never be entirely unoccupied, nor have too often recourse to the store of knowledge which you have treasured up in your soul; but collect new ideas from books and men. It is astonishing how tiresome we grow to ourselves and others if we ruminate constantly only upon our favourite ideas, and how soon we then accustom ourselves to reject all other notions that differ from those upon which we are used to feed day after day.

Our own society does however never grow more tedious and distressing to ourselves than when we have painful accounts to settle with our heart and conscience. If you wish to convince yourself of the truth of this assertion you need but to observe the difference of your disposition. How much dissatisfied with ourselves; how absent and how burthensome to ourselves are we after a train of hours which we have trifled away or spent in doing wrong, and how serene, how happy to reflect upon our conduct, and to give audience to our ideas at the close of a well-spent day!

§ VIII. You must however not be satisfied with being merely an agreeable and entertaining companion to yourself, but also avoid all sort of self-flattery and show yourself your own best and sincerest friend. If you desire to be as kind and obliging to your own person as you are to your acquaintances, you must also be as severe and just to yourself as you are to others. We are but too apt to be indulgent to ourselves while we censure the conduct of others with the greatest rigour, and to impute our deviations from the right path, though we acknowledge them as sails to fate or to irresistible impulses, while we



treat our erring brethren with intolerance. This is however extremely wrong and unjust.

§ IX. LET not the consciousness of your being better and wiser than others that are of your age and in a situation similar to yours, be the standard by which you estimate your merits; but judge of the real value of your deserts by your capacities, your education and the opportunities which you have had to grow wiser and better than many others. Give frequently an impartial account to yourself on this point in the hours of solitude, and ask yourself as an unprejudiced judge, how you have improved all opportunities to attain a higher degree of perfection ?

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### CHAPTER III.

*On the Conversation with People of different  
Tempers and Dispositions.*

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#### SECTION I.

WE allow generally that there are four different kinds of temper, and maintain that a man is either of a choleric, a phlegmatic, a sanguine,



or a melancholy disposition. Although neither of these tempers ever prevail so exclusively in our constitution as not to be modified in a smaller or greater degree by some allay of another, which infinite mixture produces the most admirable variety; yet one of these four cardinal winds generally exercises a peculiar power over the vessel of every son of Eve, to direct its course on the ocean of life. People who are entirely of a *choleric* temper are extremely dangerous to the peace and tranquillity of those that must live in their society. If your happiness be dear to you you will do well to shun them as much as possible; for their fire burns incessantly, lights and consumes without warming. People who are entirely of a *sanguine* temper are weak and inconsistent, destitute of energy and firmness. Persons of an entirely *melancholy* temper are always *phlegmatic* and a burden to themselves and others.

People of a *choleric-sanguine* temper in general are those that distinguish themselves most in the world, are more feared than others, and are more inclined to rule, to build and to destroy; the choleric-sanguine temper constitutes therefore the character which is the attribute of the ruler and the despot; if it be allayed with a

certain degree of a melancholy disposition it produces a complete tyrant.

People of a *sanguineo-phlegmatic* temper enjoy undoubtedly the happiest disposition. Their life is generally the most tranquil and undisturbed; they have a true relish of the pleasures which the world affords, do not often abuse their abilities, hurt no one; but at the same time perform no eminent deeds; yet if this character attain the highest degree of which it is capable it generally renders those that possess it voluptuaries of the coarsest and most stupid class.

*Cholerico-melancholy* people cause a great deal of mischief; thirst of blood, revenge, devastation, persecution of innocence and suicide are frequently the consequences of this disposition.

People of a *melancholy-sanguine* temper generally light the torch of their life on both ends at once, and ruin their body and soul.

*Cholerico-phlegmatic* tempers are rarely to be met with: this composition seems to imply a contradiction; and yet there are people in whose character these two extremes constantly succeed each other like ebb and flood, and these dispositions are entirely unfit for occupations that require cool reasoning and equanimity. They can be put in action only with the greatest

difficulty, and when they are roused at last from their inactivity, rage and foam like wild beasts and spoil every thing by their furious impetuosity.

*Melancholy-phlegmatic* dispositions are more intolerable than any of the preceding description, and to live with them is for every rational man hell upon earth. I repeat it once more, the mixture of tempers is infinitely variegated; but where one of these dispositions decidedly prevails we behold always certain virtues or vices in its train which are peculiar to it. Thus sanguine people for instance are generally vain, but benevolent, sympathetic and take to every thing that interests them with vivacity and passion; choleric tempers are commonly ambitious; melancholy dispositions incline to mistrust and avarice, and people of a phlegmatic temper persist obstinately in their prejudices to save themselves the trouble of reflecting. We must study the temper of men if we wish to operate upon them in conversation. I can give only a few hints with regard to this point if I am to keep within the limits of this work.

§ II. People of an *imperious* disposition are extremely difficult to be treated properly, and entirely unfit for amicable and social conver-

sation. They are determined to act every where the principal part and want to be humoured on every occasion. They not only despise what has not been erected nor is directed by themselves, but also destroy it if they can : but whenever they have the lead, or at least are persuaded they have it, they work with indefatigable zeal and overcome all difficulties that are thrown in their way. Two people of an imperious temper if united to attain jointly the same object never will produce any good, but be impelled by their private passion to destroy every thing that comes in their way. Thence we may easily conclude how we must act if we be obliged to live in the society of such people.

§ III. AMBITIOUS people must be treated with the same prudence and caution as those of an imperious temper. The imperious possess always a large share of ambition, but not all people of an ambitious disposition are also of an imperious temper. They will frequently be satisfied with acting a subaltern part provided they may hope to be able to appear to advantage; nay there are instances in which they sometimes will seek honour in humiliation, they resent however nothing with more implacability than an attack of this weak side of theirs.

§ IV. VAIN people want to be flattered; praise affords them the greatest pleasure, and they will be satisfied if we take much notice of them, display attachment to them and admire them, although we should not honour them much. As every man has more or less desire to please and to produce advantageous impressions, we may sometimes indulge a good man that is infected with this weakness in this point without doing wrong, now and then drop a word that pleases him, let him enjoy the praise which he receives and even suffer him to applaud himself a little occasionally. It is however extremely degrading for any man to act the mean part of a low flatterer, who by cringing adulation infatuates vain people in such a degree as to render them averse to hear any thing but praise, and make them shut their ears entirely against the sacred voice of truth, and shun and depreciate every good and candid man that cannot resolve to demean himself, or thinks it improper and rude to extol them in their presence. The learned and ladies are particularly apt to be spoiled by that sort of adulation, and I knew some whose company on that account was insupportable to every plain-dealing man. At every word which you are going to utter they expect



eagerly to hear something flattering and obliging, and cannot conceal their vexation and ill humour as soon as they find themselves disappointed. The last degree of this vanity leads to a kind of egotism which renders us incapable for all social and amicable connexions, and grows as burdensome to the person infected with it as it is disgusting to those that must live with him.

Although it would be wrong in us to flatter such vain people, yet not *all* persons have a right to attempt their reformation, particularly if they be not at all connected with them, to lecture them in a rude manner, to humble them, or to show them less civility and kindness than they would show to any other person ; and those that constantly must live with them would act very wrong were they to require this of us, and to desire us to assist them in reforming their spoiled friends.

Vain people are very apt to flatter others, because they expect to be repaid in their own coin.

§ V. ARROGANCE differs from imperiousness, ambition and vanity as well as from pride. I wish *pride* were regarded as a laudable equality of mind, as a consciousness of internal superiority and dignity, as a sense of our inability to

commit a mean action. This pride produces great and noble deeds; it is the last support of persecuted innocence, raises us above fate and bad men, and compels even the powerful villain to admire involuntarily the wise and good man whom he oppresses. *Arrogance* on the contrary actuates us to boast of merits which we do not possess, and to be proud of something that has no intrinsic value. It is *arrogance* that renders a blockhead proud of his titles and ancestry! It is *arrogance* that renders the wealthy citizen so stiff, rude and unsociable! It is *arrogance* that infatuates the artist with so much confidence in his supposed merits and talents, which although acknowledged as such by no person, raise him in his ideas far above all other mortals. If no person admire him, he rather will accuse the whole world of want of taste than form the natural thought that his abilities and skill cannot be so great as he supposes.

If this arrogance be the inhabitant of a poor and disregarded subject, it becomes an object of pity and rarely does much harm. It is generally attended by stupidity or ignorance, and of course incorrigible by sound reasoning, and does not deserve to be treated with modesty and indulgence. You cannot check arrogance better



than by repaying persons who are inflated with it in their own way, by appearing not to be sensible of their arrogance, or taking no notice of them, and looking upon them as you would look at an empty spot even when you want their assistance; for I know from my own experience the more you humour them the more insolence you will experience. But if you pay them in their own coin their stupidity will perplex them, and they will lower their high strain.

§ VI. It is very unpleasant to converse with irritable people who are easy to be offended. This irritability may however originate from different sources. If therefore we find that the man with whom we must live and who is apt to be irritated by the least unguarded word, or a suspicious look, or by want of attention, if you find that such a man be very prone to take offence because he is inflated with vanity and ambition, which is most frequently the case, or because he has been vexed and deceived in many instances by bad people, or because his heart feels too tenderly, or he expects to receive from others as much as he gives, you must regulate your conduct accordingly, and avoid every thing that can give offence, which how-

ever is extremely difficult. If such a man be honest and reasonable notwithstanding his weakness he will soon be reconciled again to you, and easily pacified by an amicable and cool explanation ; he will gradually be led to trust his best friends, and perhaps even shake off his weakness at last if you persist in treating him with candour and liberality. None amongst all those that are of that disposition are more difficult to be satisfied and more burthensome to society, than people who every moment think they are neglected or not honoured enough. Take care therefore not to abandon yourself to that weakness lest you not only torment yourself, but also disturb the peace and tranquillity of those that are dear to your heart.

§ VII. OBSTINATE people are by far more tedious and troublesome companions than those of an irascible temper. Yet they are nevertheless not quite intractable if they be reasonable ; for then they generally soon give way to the voice of Reason, become sensible of their misconduct and our generosity, and grow more pliable at least for a short time, if we refrain from contradicting and opposing them in the first heat of their passion ; but it is truly distressing to be obliged to live and to transact

business with people whose obstinacy is attended with stupidity and ignorance. We attempt in vain to meet them with gentleness and arguments. It is therefore advisable in most cases to suffer such stiff-necked fools to prosecute their own way blindly, and to entangle them so much in their own ideas, plans and undertakings as to compel them to apply for our assistance when they are involved in difficulties by their heedless and imprudent proceedings. If in that case we let them struggle for some time with the consequences of their heedless obstinacy they will frequently grow humble and ductile, and become sensible that they want an intelligent guide. But if a weak and obstinate man unfortunately happen but once to find out that we were wrong in opposing him, or surprise us in the commission of a trifling fault, we must give up all hopes of ever leading him again. He then will always presume to be wiser than we are and suspect our judgment and candour.

It is useless to reason with people of either description in the first moments of their heat, for this only renders them more obstinate. If we depend upon them and receive orders from them which we know will be disapproved by

themselves afterwards, we can do no better than to promise to execute them without contradiction: but either to procrastinate their execution till they have had time to consider them more maturely, or to act secretly according to our better judgment, which they generally will approve in cooler moments if we do but lead them to think that we imagined to comply with their directions in acting as we did, and refrain from boasting of the superiority and greater coolness of our own judgment.

It can be useful and necessary only in very few and very pressing instances to oppose obstinacy to obstinacy, and to refuse absolutely to give up our opinion, or to act contrary to our better judgment. But this line of conduct ceases to produce salutary effects if we observe it on trifling occasions or too often, or even when we are in the wrong. A person who constantly contradicts is generally suspected to be always in the wrong.

§ VIII. PETULANCE is a disposition which mostly arises from obstinacy, but sometimes also originates merely from singularity or an unsociable humour. There are people who pretend to know every thing better than others, contradict every one, frequently against their

own conviction, merely for the sake of disputing. There are others who are fond of speaking in *paradoxes*, and accustomed to maintain assertions which no sensible man can take seriously in the sense in which they utter them, from no other motive than to provoke contradiction; there are finally others whom the French call *querelleurs* (wranglers), that studiously seek opportunities to engage in personal disputes, in order to obtain a kind of triumph over timid people, who at least are of a more fearful disposition than themselves.

If you *must* converse with people of these descriptions, you will do well to preserve the most unshaken firmness and not to suffer yourself to be provoked. I advise you never to dispute at all with those of the first class, and to break off the discourse as soon as they contradict out of petulance. This is the only means of bridling their disputative spirit, and saves a great many useless words. Those of the second description you may sometimes indulge with the pleasure to defend their paradoxes against you; but those of the last class must be treated more severely. If you cannot avoid their society, and attempt in vain to keep them at a proper distance by coolness and



reserve, and to ward off their rudeness, I would advise you to meet them in so sensible a manner as will be sufficient to deter them from troubling you any further. Inform them without either hesitation or circumlocution of your opinion, and do not suffer yourself to be perplexed by their gasconading. My readers will do me the justice to believe that I think of *duelling* as every reasonable man ought to do, namely, that it is an immoral and irrational practice ; should however a person be *compelled* by his station in life to conform to the prejudice of returning injury for injury, and to revenge it by personal resentment, this can never be the case when he is maliciously attacked without having given any provocation, and it is extremely wrong to use against a wrangler any other weapon than contempt, or at most a cane, if he carry his impudence too far ; and it is the very height of folly to give him afterwards a chance to take away our life.

Many people are actuated by a singular spirit of contradiction. They are always eager to obtain what they never can possess, are never satisfied with the actions of others, and displeased with every thing that is not exactly as they desire it to be, although it may be ever

so excellent. It is pretty generally known that people of this description frequently can be led to act according to our wishes if we propose the contrary of what we want to accomplish, or can contrive to make them realize our own ideas in opposition to ourselves.

§ IX. IRASCIBLE people rarely offend purposely. They have however no controul over the impetuosity of their temper, and thus frequently forget themselves in the height of their passion so much as to offend even their dearest friends, but repent afterwards of their heedlessness when it is too late. I need not to prove that if these people deserve being humoured in some degree on account of other good qualities, wise compliance and gentle treatment are the only means by which the irascible man can be restored to the proper use of his reason. I must however observe that by opposing a *phlegmatic* coldness to his rage you will provoke him more than by the most violent contradiction ; for he then will think himself despised and grow more furious.

§ X. WHILE people of an irascible temper offend only out of heedlessness, and are as ready to repent and to forgive as they are apt to be irritated by the least appearance of an injury,



those of a *revengeful* disposition conceal their resentment in their heart till they find an opportunity of giving vent to their vengeance. They neither forget nor forgive an offence, even not when you offer to be reconciled to them, and use every means except cringing submission to regain their favour. A man of a revengeful temper returns every injury which he really has or only imagines to have received, not in proportion to its greatness or importance but thousandfold ; persecution for trifling offences, vengeance for inconsiderate expressions, public chastisement for private reproaches, and hesitates not to destroy our happiness if we offend his ambition. His resentment is not confined to the person of the offender, but extends itself even to his family, his civil existence and friends. It is truly extremely distressing to live with such a man, and the only advice I can give you, is to avoid as much as possible to offend him, and to endeavour to inspire him with a kind of respectful awe, which in general is the only efficacious means to curb people of a bad temper.

§ XI. LAZY and *phlegmatic* people must be spurred incessantly, and as almost every person has at least one predominant passion, we find

sometimes an opportunity to put such drowsy people in motion by exciting it.

There are some among this class of people who are prompted merely by *irresolution* to postpone business that is attended with the smallest trouble. To answer a letter, to write a receipt, to pay a bill, &c. &c. is regarded by them as a labour which requires the most tedious preparation. People of this description must sometimes actually be compelled by force to take the most pressing business in hand ; yet when they have finished their laborious task they are generally obliged to us for our importunity, although they were not pleased with it at first.

§ XII. THE company of *mistrustful, suspicious, morose* and *close* people tends more than any thing to imbitter the joys of Social Life to a noble-minded and plain-dealing man. It requires in truth a very high degree of unshaken probity, if a man shall be able to avoid growing bad and misanthropic himself, when he sees that they are alarmed at every unguarded step which he takes, and give room to ungenerous suspicion on every trifling occasion, that their bosom is inaccessible to every spark of exhilarating joy that expands his heart ; that they are

determined to share no pleasing enjoyment with him ; that they not only render the rapture of those few serene moments which Fate dispenses to us tasteless to him, but also disturb him unfeelingly in his happiest and brightest humours, rouse him cruelly from his sweetest dreams and never return his frankness, but always are upon their guard and imagine to behold an impostor in their most faithful servant, and a treacherous enemy in their sincerest friend.

This mental disease degenerates frequently into misanthropy, a character which the amiable author of *The Stranger* has painted in the most natural and animated colours.

People of such an unhappy temper are sincerely to be pitied ; for they live only to torment themselves and others, and their lamentable disposition arises not always from a depraved heart. A corrupted and thick blood is frequently the primary cause of such a temper, and a long train of undeserved misfortunes contributes very much to encrease this mental disease. It originates also but too often from the deceitful and ungenerous conduct of those with whom such people are connected. There are, alas ! but too many cruel and artful wretches.

that avail themselves of the weakness of good-natured people to gain their confidence by cunning flattery, and when they have insnared their heart by the semblance of disinterested love and have no further occasion to dissemble, pull off the mask of friendship and appear in their natural diabolical form. It would therefore be ungenerous to hate and to distress people who by external causes have been reduced to such a lamentable state of mind; and equity requires we should excuse their weakness and treat them with forbearance and pity.

If your situation should render it impossible for you to break off all connexion with persons of such an unhappy disposition, prudence requires you should not mind their whims and humour, but treat them with candour and openness on all occasions; let them see as much as possible the origin, motives, course and object of your actions; conceal nothing from them that is connected with their interest or passions; consult them in every thing that concerns them, and act jointly with them in all matters relating to them. Thus you will gain their confidence, or at least gradually remove every suspicion which they entertain against your sincerity. I also would advise you not

to let them see that you know them to be of a suspicious temper; for the suspicious is like a drunken person who will not believe that he is intoxicated, and is offended if you tell him that he has drunk too much.

Watch all instances in which your suspicious friend is deceived by his suspicion; in which he was mistaken in doubting your sincerity or that of others, or injured himself by giving way to groundless suspicion. Avail yourself of the first cool and serene moment in which he is pleased with you to remind him mildly of his error. But be careful not to let a single instance of that kind escape without improving it. Tell him whenever you have an opportunity to convince him that he wronged you (not that he is suspicious, but only) that you are glad that the purity of your heart is cleared from all suspicion. He will deny having suspected you. Do not contradict him, but be satisfied to tell him that you rejoice at his being convinced of your innocence. If you repeat this frequently you will at last succeed in making him sensible of his weakness and ashamed of his improper and unjust conduct. In endeavouring to obviate the effects of suspicion and to correct it, you must prevent all occasions on which it is



most commonly excited; for no person of a suspicious temper gives way to his weakness on *all* occasions, but every one that is subject to it abandons himself to it only on particular opportunities. If for instance your friend be near you must never interfere in his money concerns though he should desire it; if he be mysterious and reserved you must never consent to be intrusted with his secrets; if he be jealous you must avoid all opportunities to be in private with the object of his jealousy, &c. &c. &c.

On observing these rules of prudence you will be convinced that in most instances it is our fault if we cannot live happy among men. A person who unites prudence of conduct with a benevolent heart, and studies men, knows their weaknesses and avoids provoking their faults, will be able to live happy even with the most ill-tempered people. And believe me such a wise and benevolent conduct will in a short time grow easy and natural to you, though it should be attended in the beginning with a great deal of trouble and self-denial: for you need but to converse thus for some time with a suspicious person and you will cure him entirely, or at least cause his weakness to break out less

frequently and obviate many disagreeable and vexatious quarrels.

§ XIII. ONE should think that *envy* and *jealousy* could be the inheritance only of malicious and low-minded people ; and yet we find but too often an alloy of these bad qualities in the hearts of several persons who, in other respects, possess many good dispositions.—But, alas ! how frail is human nature ! ambition and vanity can easily tempt us to envy others a happiness which is the exclusive object of our wishes, and as soon as this sensation has produced in our heart a kind of aversion from the person who remains in the possession of that envied good, in spite of our envy and jealousy, we cannot avoid to rejoice secretly if he have to struggle with some misfortunes ; and Providence appears to us to justify by these calamities our inimical sentiments, particularly if we have been weak enough to betray them to others. I shall speak more at large in some other place of the conduct which we must adopt, if we be connected with people of a jealous disposition, and here give only some general rules, the observation of which may prevent us in many instances from provoking envy to direct its poisonous shafts at us. If you wish to avoid exciting the



envy of others you will do well to enjoy whatever you possess without ostentation, and to make as little shew of your prosperity, merits and talents as possible. Boast not of your wealth in every company, enjoy the pleasures of life with as much moderation and as little noise as possible ; let your dress rather bespeak taste than a propensity for ostentatious splendour ; and if you be so fortunate as to be intimately connected and to correspond with certain great and wealthy people, avoid to commit the weakness of proclaiming it to all the world, or to read with a childish vanity their letters to all your friends. Take notice of the good qualities and merits which you discover in those that envy you. Let them see that you are not blind to their brighter parts ; speak of them, commend them, and thus convince them that they also possess desirable qualities. This will tend to reconcile them, at least in some degree, to your superiority, soothe their vexation and counteract their mental disease.

§ XIV. ENVY frequently produces the dreadful vice of *calumny*, from the attacks of which even the best and worthiest characters are not secure. The best means which you can apply to guard off its baneful effects is the preservation of your innocence. Do not flatter yourself

to remain unhurt from its venomous blasts, if your conscience accuse you of secret actions which you would be ashamed to confess to the world, but have committed with so much prudence and art as to keep them entirely from the knowledge of your friends and connexions. The consciousness of having acted wrong will deprive you of the courage and firmness which you must have, if you shall be able to defeat the malicious inventions of those who want to ruin your character. But let us even suppose you should be able to meet the calumniator with firmness, notwithstanding the secret accusations of your heart, and to prove his assertions to be nothing else but malicious inventions, will your defence avail you anything if one of those private actions with which your conscience reproaches you unfortunately should transpire, and render your exculpation suspicious? And is it in the power of any mortal to direct the course of incidents so as to prevent it taking a turn which would expose him in his natural shape? If therefore you wish to evade the dire effects of calumny, you cannot be too careful to reserve your innocence of heart. But as calumny generally founds her suspicions and aspersions rather on appearances than on facts, you ought at the

same time to be extremely cautious not to commit any action that has even the *semblance* of guilt. In vain will you appeal to the purity of your heart and the innocence of your actions if appearances be against you ; for, alas ! the majority are but too prone to be guided in their opinion by the latter, and few only will take the trouble to examine impartially whether they are founded on facts or not. Endeavour therefore, as much as possible, to preserve the purity of your heart, and to avoid all unfavourable appearances if you wish to avert the poisonous shafts which calumny directs at your character.

To have displayed a warm and active zeal for the welfare of your fellow-creatures will also serve to arm you powerfully against the attacks of malicious calumniators. If you be an useless being and have done little or no good, if you have afforded advice, consolation and assistance to no one, calumny will find it easy to wound your honour ; for you have done no good actions which could speak in your defence, and there is no person who could say anything laudable of you : but if you have been active and indefatigable in doing as much good as was in your power, those to whom you have been kind will interest themselves for you when you

are slandered, and strive to rescue your character from the venomous tooth of calumny.

I must further observe; that if the good actions which you perform be to serve you as a protecting shield against the shafts of calumny, they must flow from a sincere regard for your duty as a member of human society; for it is not sufficient that we have done much good, if we wish to silence the voice of calumny by our actions; they must originate from a pure source and be done with a laudable intention. Although you should perform the brightest deeds, yet they will not be sufficient to defend you against slander and defamation, if pride, ambition, self-interest, weakness, or thirst after sensual pleasure guide your steps: calumny will find it an easy matter in that case to depreciate them, and to deprive you of the applause which you expect to earn. Let therefore all your steps be guided by the voice of your duty; let the good which you do be graced by modesty and an unassuming conduct, and you will blunt the arrows of calumny, and finally triumph over the malicious aggressors of your honour.

§ XV. PEOPLE that, without paying any regard to age, sex or merit, consider every person whom they meet as a fit object for displaying

the powers of their wit, and indiscriminately turn the words, the dress and the actions of the knave as well as of the honest man into ridicule, to excite the merriment of the company in which they are, are a most intolerable sort of beings, and frequently embitter the hours of Social happiness to feeling minds. If you be conscious of not possessing a sufficient share of coolness and moderation to defeat the purpose of these disturbers of innocent joy, you can do no better than to shun their company as much as possible. Yet as you have it not always in your power to avoid the company of these peace-disturbing wits entirely, or to break off all the connexion which you already may have formed with people of that class, you will expect me to point out to you such a line of conduct as may enable you to render their society less distressing to you.

The principal rule which I would advise you carefully to observe, is, to give no opportunity to *scoffers* to make you the butt of their ridicule; for they cannot direct the batteries of their wanton wit against you if you do not encourage them either by your discourses or actions to attack you. Take care therefore not to offend them, nor to expose your weak side

in their presence. As soon as you provoke people of that description, hurt them in the slightest degree, or in any manner give occasion for ridicule by your actions or words, and betray your weakness, they will take it as a signal to discharge the artillery of their false wit against you. You must therefore take a firm resolution to treat them with the greatest precaution, not to render yourself odious to them by a too visible coolness or incivility, by disobliging them or speaking ill of them in their absence, or offending their pride, and not to irritate them in those parts where they are apt to take fire. Be also always upon your guard not to speak nor to do anything that could expose you to ridicule. Be particularly careful not to distinguish yourself from your cotemporaries by a singular dress or awkward manners; and accommodate yourself as far as is consistent with propriety, and the regard which you owe to yourself, to the innocent customs of your age. Avail yourself of every opportunity to mix with polite society, to shake off that awkward bashfulness and perplexity which but too often overshadows the lustre of the brightest jewel, and frequently excites the laughter of ridicule against those who, by their intrinsic worth, are intitled to



claim the regard and the applause of every man of sense and feeling.

It is however not sufficient only to avoid an opportunity to the scoffer to ridicule you ; if you be desirous to shield yourself against the wanton sallies of his merciless wit you must also deprive him of all *courage* to attack you. To effect this, I would advise you to display a certain dignity of conduct on your first meeting with people who are apt to ridicule others ; to shew them by your looks, by the tone of your voice and your whole deportment what they have to expect from you. Let your countenance always bespeak your consciousness of innate dignity while you are in their society ; refrain from jesting and being familiar with them, and maintain your seriousness with an unshaken equanimity. Should the scoffer, notwithstanding this mode of conduct, which in general intimidates those shallow-brained wits, make an attempt to distress you by his ridicule, you will undoubtedly deprive him of the courage to make a second trial if you tell him plainly, with a certain dignity of mien and accent, that you are determined not to suffer yourself to be abused by him. But as some of my readers may think it rather difficult to regulate their conduct at



all times according to these rules, and to apply them properly, I shall add one more which every intelligent being is capable of observing, and which is by far more important and decisive than those which I have pointed out already.

Live as an *honest* man and a *useful* member of human society ; be a tender father to your children, an affectionate husband, a loyal subject of your King, diligent and careful in the performance of the duties of your calling, just to every one, benevolent and charitable, modest, obliging, peaceable, polite and liberal in Social Life, and no scoffer will dare to attack you : and if, nevertheless, he should make an attempt to direct the shafts of his wit at you he will never be capable of wounding your honour, nor of hurting you materially ; but his ridicule will excite the indignation of all those that know and respect your virtue.

§ XVI. AVARICE is one of the meanest and most disgraceful passions. No meanness can be imagined which a miser is not capable of committing if his thirst for riches be excited ; and all nobler sensations, friendship, pity and benevolence are shut out of his heart if they be not productive of gain : nay, he denies himself even the most innocent pleasures if he can-

not have them for nothing. He considers every stranger as a thief, and himself as a parasite who lives at the expence of his better self, of his Mammon. However in our times, when luxury is carried to a higher degree every day, when the wants of even the most sober man, who must live in the world and maintain a family, are so great ; when the price of provisions rises day after day, and so much depends upon the influence of money, and the rich has a decided superiority over the poor ; and finally, when imposition and falsehood on one side, and mistrust and want of fellow-feeling on the other encrease visibly in all ranks, and therefore reliance upon the assistance of our fellow-citizens becomes an unsafe capital ;—in these times it would be wrong in us to call every saving and prudent man a miser, without having inquired first into his situation, and the motives which excited his actions.

Amongst the real misers there are also some who, besides the thirst after money, are ruled by another co-prevailing passion. These people accumulate, save, cheat others, and deny themselves every thing that does not tend to satisfy that passion, whether it be lust, gluttony, ambition, curiosity, gambling, or any other object.

I have known people who would have betrayed for the sake of a guinea a friend, and even a brother or a sister, and exposed themselves to public infamy ; whereas they thought their money well applied in purchasing a single moment of sensual gratification at the price of a hundred and more guineas.

There are others who so ill calculate as to save pence and to throw away guineas. They love money, but do not know how to husband it. In order to recover the sums of which they have been cheated by rogues, swindlers, adventurers and flatterers they stint their servants, buy the worst sort of provisions if they can save something by it, haggle with the industrious tradesman and shopkeeper about a few pence in a most degrading manner, and inquire eagerly after those places where the articles which they want can be had at the cheapest rate, though perhaps not always of the best quality.

Finally, there are others who are liberal on every occasion and in general are not afraid to spend money ; but in one single point, on which they put a peculiar value, ridiculously stingy. My friends have frequently censured me for being over-parsimonious with regard to writing materials, and I cannot deny being subject to

that weakness. Although I am not rich yet I part less reluctantly with a shilling than with a sheet of the best writing paper.

If you wish to preserve the favour of avaricious people you will do well never to ask any thing of them ; yet as this cannot always be avoided, prudence requires you should learn to which of the above described classes of avaricious people the man belongs with whom you have to deal, that you may be able to regulate your conduct accordingly.

With regard to the conversation with spend-thrifts I have only to observe, that a rational man ought not to suffer himself to be misled by their example to incur foolish expenses, and that it is beneath the dignity of an honest man to take advantage of their thoughtless liberality either for his own benefit or that of his friends.

§ XVII. WE must not expect that even our noblest and wisest actions will always be attended with gratitude and success. This principle I think we ought to have always before our eyes if we wish not to grow averse from serving others, or become inimical to our fellow-creatures and dissatisfied with God and our fate. We should however be destitute of every human feeling if

it did not vex us to see ourselves slighted by people whom we have served faithfully, sincerely and without self-interest—to whom we have devoted ourselves entirely and perhaps even sacrificed our own advantage,—as soon as they have no further occasion for our assistance; or betrayed, abused and persecuted when they can obtain by their ingratitude temporal advantages, or gain the favour of our powerful enemies. This will however not deter a man who knows the human heart and is a warm friend of virtue from being generous. As I shall have an opportunity of recurring again to this subject in two succeeding chapters, I shall only observe at present, that every good action rewards itself; yea, that a man of a humane and liberal disposition, if he know beforehand that he must not look for gratitude amongst men derives a new source of internal satisfaction from that very ingratitude, namely, the pleasure of being conscious of having done good merely from a love of his duty. He laments the corruption of those that are capable of forgetting their benefactor, and continues to be ready and studious to serve those that are so much the more in want of his assistance, the weaker they are and the less internal happiness they have in their heart. Do not therefore com-

plain of the ingratitude which you experience, nor reproach the ungrateful for it, but continue to be generous to him! Receive him again when he returns to you, he may grow sensible at last of the excellency and nobleness of your conduct, and repair the injury of which he is guilty—if not, I advise you to reflect that every vice punishes itself, and that the heart of the ungrateful wretch, and the unavoidable consequences of his meanness, will avenge you upon him—Alas! what a long chapter on the ingratitude of men could I write! How many instances of it have I experienced on the thorny path of the mazy labyrinths of life! But I will be silent and strive to forget the degeneracy of my brethren.

§ XVIII. MANY people find it absolutely impossible to pursue any object of their wishes on a strait path; *artifice, cunning* and *infidiousness* guide them in all their undertakings, although their heart be not entirely bad. A certain unfortunate disposition of mind, timidity and the influence of the occurrences of life, are frequently the principal causes which produce that character. A suspicious man for instance is but too apt to veil even the most innocent transactions in mysteriousness, to *disguise him-*



self and to conceal the real object of his pursuits. A man of an ill-regulated activity and of too fiery a temper, an artful enterprising genius, who is in a situation in which he meets with too much uniformity and sameness, and finds no opportunity to unfold and display his talents, will attempt numerous crooked ways to extend his compass of activity, or to render the scene of action more interesting ; and in that case he will not be over-conscientious in the choice of the means which he applies to accomplish his purpose. A very vain man will proceed with a great deal of mysteriousness to conceal his weakness. A courtier who is used to see nothing but deceit, intrigues, cabals and plots, and is not accustomed to go the strait way, will think a life that flows along without intricacies very uniform and tedious, veil his most unimportant steps in impenetrable mysteriousness, and give to his most innocent transactions an enigmatical appearance. The lawyer who is constantly occupied with the sophistries of chicane, is very fond of dealing in puns and quibbles on every occasion. People that have overstrained their imagination by reading novels and other fantastical books, or lost their sense for simplicity, artless nature and truth through



a profligate and idle life or bad company, cannot exist without intriguing ; and there are also a great number of people who do not wish half as ardently for an object which they can obtain in a regular manner as for what they expect to procure clandestinely and surreptitiously. Even the most generous and open man, particularly if he be young, may be tempted to have recourse to crooked means if we constantly treat him with mistrust, or with so much severity as to render him incapable to place any confidence in us.

But whatever may have contributed to accustom a person to employ artifice and intrigues, the following mode of conduct is the best which you can adopt in your dealings with characters of that description. Treat them always with openness and candour, and show yourself by words and deeds a decided enemy to every thing that can be called artifice, intrigue and deceit ; and as a warm admirer of every honest man, to make them sensible how much they would lose in your eyes if ever you should surprise them on crooked paths.

Display an unlimited confidence in their honesty while they have not deceived you, and lead them to think that you are incapable of

believing they should ever be able to attempt imposing upon you. If they set any value on your regard they then will carefully avoid displeasing you.

Be as tolerant to their weaknesses and as ready to pardon and to excuse their failings (provided they have meditated no malicious trick) as will be sufficient to convince them, that they have no reason to fear and deceive you as vigorous censors.

Do not watch their conduct as a spy nor attempt to sift them in a circuitous manner, but question them frankly and directly in a firm tone and with penetrating looks, if you want to obtain some elucidation which you have a right to demand. Should they stammer and attempt to elude your question, I would advise you either to drop the subject of your inquiries entirely, letting them see you wish to spare them the shame of imposing upon you, and to treat them afterwards with more coldness than usual, or to caution them in an amicable but serious manner not to disgrace themselves.

Should they however deceive you notwithstanding your endeavours to prevent it, prudence bids you not to treat their insincerity slightly ! Display the greatest indignation at the

first false step, and do not forgive it immediately. But if all this should not be capable of correcting them, should they continue to impose upon you you can take no better measure than punishing them by contempt, and letting them see you shall suspect all their professions and actions until they be entirely corrected. I must however observe, that a person who is once accustomed to artifice and crooked dealings very seldom returns to the path of truth and candour.

The above rules are also applicable in the treatment of *liars*.

§ XIX. THOSE that commonly are called *boasters*, *braggers* and *puffers* are of a different species. They have no intention to deceive actually, but invent stories or exaggerate real facts for no other purpose than to show themselves more to advantage and attract the notice of others; to induce others to form a high opinion of their talents and merits; to excite astonishment by the relation of wonderful incidents, or to be regarded as agreeable and cheerful companions; and if once they have acquired a habit of adorning and exaggerating an incident, a simile or a sentence at the expence of truth, they sometimes believe their own bragging and

puffing and view all objects through a microscope.

The relations and descriptions of such puffing boasters are sometimes entertaining enough; and if we be once acquainted with their emblematical language we know how much we have to believe.

Yet if they should carry their exaggerations too far, I would advise you either to entangle them in their own net by a number of questions about the minutest circumstances, so as to render them unable to advance or to retreat and thus put them to the blush, or to return them for every gasconade another still more comical and exaggerated, and thus convince them that you are not so silly as to believe them; or to furl the sails of conversation suddenly as soon as they begin to puff, which if repeated frequently generally will make them more cautious.

§ XX. IMPUDENT, *idle* and *intriguing* people, *parasites* and *flatterers* ought to be kept at a proper distance. You will do well not to be too familiar with them, and to let them know by a civil but cool and serious treatment that their society and familiarity is not agreeable to you. Parasites who seek our company on ac-

count of our table, will not trouble us for any length of time with their intrusion if we never ask them to eat or to drink with us; but against flatterers particularly those of a finer class, we ought to be more on our guard for the sake of our own moral character. They spoil our heart entirely if we accustom our ear to listen to their poisonous discourses: we then want constantly to be tickled, are disgusted with the voice of truth, and neglect and slight our most faithful and best friends, who are desirous to make us sensible of our defects and errors. If you wish not to fall thus deeply, arm yourself with indifference against the baneful allurements of flattery. Shun the flatterer as you would flee from a venomous serpent. This is however not so easy to be done as you perhaps may think. Some people have a manner of saying flatteries which appear to be just their reverse. The artful flatterer that has explored your blind side will not applaud always, if he know that you have too much sense not to see the danger that lurks beneath the coarser snares of flattery, but will sometimes rather censure you. He will for instance, tell you "that he cannot comprehend how a noble-minded and wise man like you, could forget himself so much for a mo-

ment ; he had thought that this could happen only to ordinary people like himself." If you be an authour he will censure defects in your writings, which at first sight must appear trifling to you, and only serve him to applaud those passages of which he knows you to be proud with so much the more impudence. He will discover weaknesses, and censure you with a pretended zeal for defects that flatter your vanity. He will for instance call you a misanthrope if you wish to be famous for your solitary manner of life, and charge you with being intriguing if you be desirous to appear as a consummate courtier. In this manner he will lead you imperceptibly to think that he is an impartial lover of truth ; you will greedily swallow his sweet poison, and in your infatuation open your heart and purse to the artful deceiver.

§ XXI. I SHALL now speak of the conduct which we ought to observe with regard to *Villains*: that is, people whose heart has been depraved so much by a neglected education, bad company or other causes, as to exhibit no vestige of its former good disposition.

It is obvious that we must avoid if possible all connexions with people of this description, if we



really are anxious to preserve our peace of mind and have our moral improvement at heart. Although a man of firm principles will not easily be spoiled in their company, yet he may accustom himself gradually to the sight of villanies, and thus lose that aversion from every thing that is mean, which frequently is alone sufficient to preserve us from falling in moments of temptation. We are however but too often necessitated by our situation in life to live in the midst of villains, and to transact business jointly with them, and in that case it will be necessary not to lose sight of certain rules of prudence.

If you distinguish yourself by superiour talents and a conspicuous excellence of heart, you have just reason to apprehend that people of bad principles and morals will attempt to disturb your peace of mind and to vex you. There exists an eternal league between villains and blockheads against all good and sensible people, such an intimate connexion as enables them to know each other among the rest of mankind, a kind of fraternity which renders them willing to go hand-in-hand, although they should be ever so much separated by other circumstances, as soon as an opportunity offers to persecute and to trample upon real merit. No kind of precau-



tion and reserve can avail anything against that confederation; you will rely in vain upon your openness and innocence, in vain proceed with moderation and lenity, conceal your merits and attempt to screen yourself by the appearance of mediocrity, if you really be a man of sense and a votary of virtue. No one discovers the excellencies which you possess easier than those that are totally destitute of these good qualities; no one does secretly more justice to merit than a villain; but he trembles at it like satan at the gospel, and leaves no stone unturned to oppose it. That numerous confederation of villains and blockheads will tease you incessantly, attack your honour, now speak ambiguously of you, and now with undisguised malignity, and maliciously misrepresent your most innocent words and actions.

But be not frightened at it although you should be actually distressed for some time by knaves and villains, yet the probity and the consequences of your actions will finally conquer, and your enemies be entrapt in their own snares. Besides rogues and villains are unanimous only while no manly firmness and resolution is required, and while they can fight in the dark, but disperse as soon as they are exposed to

the light. Pursue therefore firmly the strait path which your duty points out to you. Never indulge yourself with the application of crooked means, never employ artifice to defeat roguery, never have recourse to intrigues to counteract cabals, and never associate with villains against villains. Act generously ! Ill treatment and suspicion if carried too far can make a complete *villain* of a person who is only half a *rogue* ; whereas generosity may sometimes correct a hardened knave and render him attentive to the voice of his conscience. You will however do well to make him sensible that your conduct before him is not regulated by fear, but solely by voluntary generosity. Let him feel that when matters are carried too far, and the indignation of a resolute and honest man breaks loose, the wise and courageous votary of virtue in the dust is more to be dreaded than a rogue bedecked with purple ; that a noble mind, that virtue, prudence and spirit render a man more powerful than a knave is at the head of an army of vile hirelings. What has a man to fear who has left nothing else at stake than what no mortal can wrest from him ? and how little can a cowardly sultan, an unjust despot, who constantly carries an enemy with him in his bosom that

goads him incessantly ! how little, I say, can such a contemptible being prevail in the moment of extreme and despairing necessity against the meanest of his subjects, who is supported in the conflict by the firmest allies, an unpolluted heart, a sound understanding, an undaunted spirit and a pair of sinewy arms ?

It is impossible to render ourselves beloved by some people, and in that case it will be at least some advantage to be dreaded by them.

There are others that will avail themselves of every opportunity to betray us into a certain confidence and familiarity in order to obtain arms against us, with which they threaten to assail us when we refuse to obey their imperious dictates. Prudence requires we should guard against such dangerous persons as much as possible.

Make presents to the person whom you have reason to suspect of being inclined to *rob* you, if you think generosity can make any impression upon his heart.

Encourage and honour people that *display* an active propensity to do good. Do not ruin their credit if you possibly can avoid it. There are people who *speak* extremely well but are knaves in their actions, highly inconsequent, thoughtless and passionate. Do not unmask them if

the consequences of their disposition do not render it absolutely necessary. They do at least some good by their discourses, which will remain undone if you render them suspected of duplicity. They ought to be sent from place to place to promote good purposes, but never to stay long in one place lest they should expose themselves, and by their example destroy the good effects of their doctrines.

§ XXII. PEOPLE that are too *modest* and *timid* ought to be encouraged and inspired with confidence in themselves. Too much timidity is as unmanly as impudence and arrogance are despicable. A man of a noble disposition ought to be sensible of his worth, and as just to himself as he is to others. Yet a modest man is offended by too much praise, and too visible marks of distinction : display, therefore, the regard which you have for him less by words than by actions, which are the best proofs of real affection.

§ XXIII. IMPRUDENT and *talkative* people ought, naturally, not to be trusted with secrets. It would indeed be much better if there existed no secrets at all, if we could always act openly and frankly, and let every one see the most secret thoughts of our heart ; it would be

much better if men thought and uttered nothing but what every one might know : yet as this is not always possible, particularly with people who are in public offices and entrusted with the secrets of others, we must therefore be cautious to whom we communicate our secrets.

There are people who are utterly incapable of keeping a secret. Their running anxiously from place to place, like a hen that is going to lay an egg, is a certain indication that they have some secret to disclose, and suffer much uneasiness till they have communicated it to another gossip. Others are indeed not disinclined to keep the secrets which have been entrusted to them, but wanting prudence betray them involuntarily by their looks, hints and signs ; or from want of firmness are incapable to resist importunate inquirers, or to have too good an opinion of the discretion and probity of others, which frequently makes them commit a breach of secresy. To people of this class you cannot be too reserved.

*Curious* people, who make it their business to explore the private concerns of others may be treated in a different manner, as circumstances require. If you wish to check their prying curiosity at once, and to deter them from making



any further attempts to meddle with your private concerns, to act the part of eaves-droppers, to watch your steps and to pry into your plans and transactions, you can take no surer step than to declare to them with energy and spirit, that you are determined to resist their impertinent intrusion, and to resent the least attempt of theirs to meddle with your affairs. Should you, however, wish to divert yourself at the expence of their prying disposition, you may amuse their curiosity by directing it to such a number of trifles as will keep them constantly employed, and leave them no time to trouble themselves about matters which you are desirous of concealing from them.

*Heedless* and *forgetful* people are unfit for any business that requires punctuality. Young persons may sometimes be weaned from this defect, and trained to keep their thoughts together. Many that are forgetful and heedless from a lively temper, will shake off that weakness when they grow older and more sedate. Others affect to be thoughtless, because they imagine that it gives them an appearance of learning. Fools of that sort deserve to be pitied; and I would advise you to take no notice of their studied distraction. They ought to be treated

like those that pretend being nervous or sickly to create interest. But if you be connected with people who really have a short memory, you will do well to advise them to write down whatever they wish to retain, and to peruse these memorandums frequently ; for nothing is more disagreeable than to be connected with people who promise to execute business of importance for us, to rely upon their word, and to find afterwards that they do not recollect a syllable of it.

I must observe on this occasion, that it is wrong to be provoked or vexed if people who are naturally inclined to be heedless and distracted, sometimes neglect to shew us the civility and attention which we have a right to expect, as this is done unintentionally, and without any view to offend us.

§ XXIV. THERE is a description of people who are commonly called *whimsical*, (difficult). They are not always of a vicious temper, nor at all times morose and quarrelsome, yet generally hard to be pleased. They have accustomed themselves, for instance, to a pedantic regularity, the rules of which are not so familiar to their friends and connexions as to themselves ; we may therefore easily happen to offend them, by putting, for example, a chair in their apartments in a wrong



place ; or they are addicted to certain oddities, and for instance, dress, speak, or write in a peculiar manner—singularities to which we must accommodate ourselves if we wish to preserve their good opinion. One would think that people of sense ought to be above such trifles ; yet we frequently meet with men who in other respects betray no small degree of sound judgment and equity, but in these or similar points are uncommonly difficult. If the good opinion of people of that description be of any consequence to you, I advise you to accommodate yourself to their singularities as far as is consistent with honour and probity, and to please them in matters of such a trifling nature. But even if you should not be connected with them, nor care for their favour, you ought nevertheless not to ridicule nor distress them on account of their peculiarities, if they be respectable characters ; for every one of us has his failings, which we must tolerate reciprocally with fraternal indulgence.

People who think it an honour to distinguish themselves from others by the peculiarity of their conduct in unimportant matters,—not because they are convinced of acting with more propriety than the rest, but chiefly because they

are determined to differ from their cotemporaries in their behaviour,—are called *singular*. They are pleased to see that their singularity is taken notice of; and a sensible man that is connected with such people ought carefully to examine whether their singularities are of an innocent nature, and whether they deserve to be spared for other considerations, that he may be able to regulate his conduct towards them according to reason and the precepts of tolerance.

As for people who are ruled by humours, and to-day will receive you with the greatest kindness and good nature, and to-morrow perhaps treat you with a chilling coldness, I advise you to take no notice of the continual ebb and tide of their fancies, but always treat them in the same cautious manner; should however their humorous conduct proceed from secret sufferings they are intitled to your compassion.

§ XXV. STUPID people who are sensible of their weakness, suffer themselves to be guided by men of sense and judgment, and by a naturally good, benevolent and gentle disposition are easily prompted to do good; but when with difficulty persuaded to turn bad, ought not to be despised. All men cannot possess an elevated

mind, and the world would be badly off if all were alike. There must be a greater number of subaltern geniuses than of high-spirited people in this world, unless all are to live in a continual warfare. It cannot indeed be denied that a certain superior degree of virtue which requires mental strength, energy, firmness and a clear judgment, is inconsistent with weakness of understanding; but this is not absolutely necessary. If the happiness of mankind be but promoted, and the weaker class suffer themselves to be made instrumental to it, then are they more useful members of society than all eccentric geniuses with their indefatigable and wild activity.

It is however extremely disagreeable and insupportable to be connected with a blockhead that imagines himself a demi-god, with a vain, obstinate and suspicious fool, a spoiled and proud dunce that thinks himself capable to rule countries and nations when he cannot govern himself. As I shall have frequent opportunities in the course of this work to point out the particular rules which we must observe should we be connected with such conceited fools, I shall refrain mentioning them here to avoid useless repetition.

I must observe on this occasion, that we frequently commit the greatest injustice by be-

stowing the epithets of weak, stupid, insensible and ignorant, upon people who in fact are quite the reverse. Every one possesses not the gift of displaying his ideas and sentiments to advantage. We ought therefore to judge of people chiefly by their actions; but in doing this we must never omit to reflect upon their situation, and the opportunities which they had or had not to distinguish themselves. We very seldom consider that a man has already great merit if he do no wrong, and that the sum of negative good frequently contributes more to general happiness than the long life of an active man, whose violent passions are continually at war with his great and noble views. Learning, mental accomplishments and plain sense are besides very different things. People of a certain education and politure are generally guided by a certain tone that prevails in the society which they frequent, and we are but too apt to confound principles which rest upon that tone with the invariable dictates of pure wisdom. We are used to shape our ideas after that arbitrary standard, or rather to repeat words whose ambiguous sense we scarcely should be capable of explaining to a raw child of nature, and thus are led to mistake for a blockhead every one

that is not initiated into the nonsensical mysteries of our circle, and bluntly speaks as he thinks. A man may possess a large share of plain sense and a high degree of erudition, and yet act a very sorry part in one of our elegant and fashionable circles, because he is unacquainted with the subjects that are the common topics of conversation in these assemblies, which are but too often beneath the notice of a man who is sensible of his intrinsic dignity, and ashamed to speak nonsense ; or he has too much conscientiousness and veneration for candour, truth and virtue to be capable of uttering unmeaning flatteries in order to display his wit at the expence of decency. You would therefore wrong him very much were you to set him down for a stupid blockhead on account of his silence, or the timidity and awkwardness which he displays when he cannot avoid joining in a conversation for which he has no relish. Do not therefore despise people of this cast, nor distress them by ridicule ; for they are deserving of your regard ; consider that you would be as awkwardly situated in a circle of people of their manner of thinking as they are in your company, and appear equally stupid and ignorant to them as they appear to you !

If we be connected with *good-natured* but *weak* people, it will be prudent in us to endeavour to collect a circle of virtuous friends around them, who will not abuse their weakness and prompt them to deeds which are unworthy a benevolent heart.

There are people who can refuse nothing, at least not orally; and thence it happens they promise more than they can perform, give more, and take more trouble upon themselves for others than in justice they ought to do, merely because they are afraid to give pain to any one, or to appear disinclined to serve others. Others are so credulous as to trust every one, sacrifice themselves for every one, and mistake every person for a sincere friend that has the appearance of an honest and a benevolent man. Others are not capable of asking anything for themselves, although they should thus be debarred from the attainment of advantages to which they have the justest claims. It would be needless to exhibit how much all these weak people are abused, how much the good nature and obliging disposition of the former is intruded upon, and how often impudence wrests every advantage from the latter, because they have not courage to defend the justness of



their claims. Do not abuse the weakness of any person, nor attempt to obtain surreptitiously advantages, presents or assistance which you cannot demand from people of the above class with the strictest justice and without distressing them. Endeavour also to prevent others from abusing them in a similar manner. Encourage the timid; interfere in his behalf; speak for him when his weakness prevents him speaking for himself, and assist him whenever he wants your assistance.

Some people are so weak as to abandon themselves entirely to a certain favourite *propensity*. People of this class speak of nothing with so much pleasure as of their favourite object; all their ideas revolve constantly round that point, and they miss no opportunity to introduce it on every occasion; their hobby-horse may be a noble passion or not, may consist in a predilection for hunting, horses and hounds, or for dancing and music, painting, prints or any other particular. They forget in that case that the person to whom they are speaking perhaps knows nothing at all of their favourite object, nor do they wish he should have much knowledge of it, if he but patiently listen to them, or admire their darling and seem to



be delighted with it. Who could be so cruel as not to indulge an honest and sensible man in so trifling a pleasure ? I advise you particularly to notice the innocent hobby-horses of the Great with whom you wish to ingratiate yourself ; for a lash given to this favourite ‘ is more painfully felt,’ as Tristram Shandy observes, ‘ than a blow which the rider receives.’

§ XXVI. It is easy and pleasant to converse with *cheerful* and *lively* people who are animated with *real* good humour ; I say they must be animated with *real* good humour ; their cheerfulness must flow from the heart, must not consist in idle jesting, nor in hunting after witticisms. A man who can laugh from the bottom of his heart and abandon himself to the ebullitions of jocundity, cannot be thoroughly bad. Malice and cunning render us serious, pensive and close ; but a man who can laugh heartily is not dangerous. From this however we must not infer that every person who is not of a cheerful temper is bent on mischief.

The disposition of our mind depends upon our temper as well as on our health, and on internal and external relations. Genuine cheerfulness usually is catching, and this epidemic of hilarity as I may call it is so highly beneficent,

we feel so unspeakably happy in laughing away all the troubles of this world, that I cannot exhort you too pressingly to cheer up your mind, and to devote at least a few hours every week to innocent hilarity.

It is however difficult not to fall into a satirical tone when we are in a jovial disposition and give the reins to our wit. What can afford us more matter for laughing than the numerous follies of men? And when we laugh at these follies it is almost unavoidable not to laugh at the fools who commit them, in which case our merriment may produce very disagreeable and dangerous consequences.

When our ridiculing jokes meet with applause we are commonly tempted to give our wit a keener edge; while others perhaps deprived of such opportunity would be in want of matter for a lively conversation, are misled by our example to explore with additional assiduity the defects of their neighbours, the consequences of which are partly known but too well, and partly have been touched upon in the preceding chapter. I would therefore advise you to be upon your guard in conversing with satirical people. I do not however mean to infer that you ought to be afraid of their cutting tongue,

for this would afford them just ground for suspecting you to be pusillanimous in the highest degree ; but wish only to exhort you not to suffer yourself to be seduced to join in their satirical abuse, thereby to hurt yourself and others and to depart from the spirit of toleration. Do not therefore applaud too much satirical people, nor encourage their propensity to display their wit at the expence of others, and do not laugh when they *lampoon* and *ridicule* their neighbours !

§ XXVII. DRUNKARDS, *Voluptuaries* and *all votaries of vice* in general you ought to shun, and if possible to avoid their Society ; yet if you should not always be able to do it, you cannot be too careful to watch over your innocence lest it should be infected by their example. This however is not sufficient ; it is also your duty not to indulge them in their excesses, how pleasing soever the shape may be in which they appear, but to shew as far as prudence permits that you have an unconquerable aversion against them, and to be particularly careful never to join in smutty discourses.

We see frequently that elegant *rakes* are uncommonly well received in the fashionable circles as they are called ; and but too often

experience in many societies, particularly in such as consist entirely of males, that the conversation turns upon obscene ambiguities, which inflame the imagination of young people and spread farther the corruption of morals. An honest man ought not to contribute the least thing in the world to this general corruption of morals; he rather is bound to display his aversion from it in the strongest manner, without shewing any respect of persons; and if he cannot correct people who walk on the path of vice by amicable admonitions, and by directing their activity to nobler objects, at least to convince them that he values decency and virtue, and that innocence must be respected in his presence.

§ XXVIII. ENTHUSIASTICAL, *romantic* and *eccentric* people live and move in a world of fancies, and are sworn enemies to cool reflection. Fashionable readings, novels, plays, secret societies, want of real and scientific knowledge and idleness infect a great number of our modern youth with this disease; we however also frequently meet with *hoary* enthusiasts. They are constantly bent upon the unnatural and supernatural; despise the good that is within their reach to pursue distant phantasms;

neglect what is useful and necessary to form plans for the attainment of what is not needful; abandon themselves to idleness when it is their duty to exert themselves, in order to interfere in matters that do not concern them; want to reform the world and neglect their own domestic affairs; deem important subjects trifling and are enraptured with absurdities; do not comprehend what is plain and preach up incomprehensible doctrines. You will in vain attempt to convert them by arguments of sound reason; for they will despise you as one of the common herd, tax you with want of feeling and indifference to great and noble objects, pity you for your wisdom, and rather connect themselves with fools of their own way of thinking than associate with you. If therefore you are really desirous to convince such an enthusiast of some truth or to gain credit with him, your discourses must be warm and animated, and you must speak in behalf of sound reason with as much fervour as he displays in defending his follies.

It is however very difficult to reform such people, and it will frequently be best to leave it to time to cure them of their folly. Yet enthusiasm is frequently catching. If therefore you have a lively imagination, and are not quite

certain of being able to keep it under the controul of your understanding, I advise you to be upon your guard in conversing with enthusiasts of any kind. In our century, in which the rage for secret associations has acquired an almost general ascendancy over mankind, means have even been found to bring all sorts of religious, theosophic, chemical and political enthusiasm into regular systems. I forbear to decide which of these sorts of enthusiasm is the most pernicious; yet I think that which presumes to reform the world is pregnant with inconceivable mischief; I have so much the more reason to believe it firmly, as this sort of systematic enthusiasm can produce the greatest confusion in the State, and generally has the most imposing appearance; whereas the rest soon become tiresome and are capable of charming only perverted and inferior geniusses for a length of time. I would therefore advise you to regard in your conversation with the apostles of such systems, the words—*happiness of the world—liberty—equality—rights of men—cultivation—general mental illumination—reform—spirit of cosmopolitism*—and the like, merely as allurements, or at most as well-meant empty words with which these people amuse themselves like



school-boys with the oratorical figures and tropes which they must apply in their meagre exercises.

I advise you in general to let eccentrical people pursue their course at pleasure, while they are not yet perfectly qualified for the mad-house; for the world is large enough to contain a great number of fools.

§ XXIX. I now beg leave to say a few words concerning *devotees*, *puritans* and *hypocrites*.

People whose sentiments correspond with their external zeal for religion, whose warmth for piety and divine worship, and whose attachment to the rites of that church whose tenets they profess, flow from the heart, have the strongest claim to our regard. Although their conduct should be guided rather by pious sentiments than by the light of reason; although their religious feelings should proceed from a heated imagination, and their attachment to certain ceremonies, rites and systems be carried to a higher pitch than is consistent with sound reason, yet they deserve toleration, forbearance and fraternal love, provided they be honest men and practical christians. But an hypocritical villain that wears the mask of sanctity, meekness and religion, and is a volup-

tuous seducer of innocence, a malicious calumniator, or a fanatical persecutor, deserves to be branded with *ignominy*. It is however not difficult to distinguish these two sorts of people. A man who is really pious is open, candid, peaceable and cheerful, not over civil nor too humble, but benevolent, simple and easy in conversation; he is indulgent, gentle, meek and just to every one; talks not much of religious subjects, except in the circle of his intimate friends; the hypocrite, on the contrary, is accustomed to wheedle, to sneak and to flatter, is always upon his guard, a slave of the great and wealthy, an adherer of the prevailing party, a friend of the happy, but never a disinterested defender of the deserted. He talks constantly of honesty and religion, gives generally large alms, and performs the duties of christian charity in an ostentatious manner; excuses the faults of others in such a manner as makes them appear to be ten times more glaring than they really are. Be careful to form no connexion whatever with people of this description! Shun them as much as possible! Do not offend nor hurt them if your peace and happiness be dear to you!

People who believe without any sufficient

ground in certain *doctrines* and *obligations*, or in supernatural *causes*, *agencies* and *apparitions*, who for instance believe that God is an irascible and revengeful Being, that those who are heretics in their opinion ought to be deprived of all civil privileges, that the sign of the cross has a peculiar and supernatural effect, that ghosts and superiour beings can appear to men, &c. &c. &c. and who regard these objects of their faith as highly sacred and inviolable are called *superstitious*. It is a certain criterion of superstition to believe *too much*, *i. e.* more than sound reason warrants. People who are given to superstition do not therefore listen to the voice of reason, but are deaf to sober arguments and believe the most contradictory tenets. They never give up an opinion which they have once adopted, how absurd and incomprehensible soever it may be, and the firmness of their faith is founded merely on habit. They have heard for instance a certain tenet asserted in their youth, it was recommended to them as a religious truth, and they have believed in it for many years; or something was inculcated into their mind as an invariable duty and obligation; or they were taught to believe that certain invisible powers produce certain effects: and now they continue to adhere

to that opinion, because they have accustomed themselves so much to believe it that the contrary of it appears to them a daring violation of truth, which they are bound to abhor or to hate : and as reason opposes to their belief incontrovertible doubts, their commodiousness leads them to think that the voice of reason ought not to be listened to in matters of faith.

*Superstition* undoubtedly is a source of numerous evils and productive of great misery ; and it is extremely painful and distressing for every individual to be connected with its votaries: for the superstitious abhors every one that is of a different opinion. He applies to those that differ from him in their belief certain names which encrease this aversion, because he connects with them the idea of people that are hateful to the Godhead. He therefore reposes no confidence in them, and cannot persuade himself to love them. He thinks it frequently a sin to have any connexion with them, and if he had it in his power he is also but too often inclined to persecute them. He is averse from every thing tending to disturb his faith. He regards every person who opposes his notions by arguments of sound reason as his enemy. He is therefore an enemy to all mental illumination though he

deny to hate it; and opposes all persons and means that promote it. He is for this reason very seldom a firm friend, a good citizen and subject. We must at least constantly apprehend that he will spare neither his sovereign nor his father, nor his fellow-citizen, if any of his tenets should excite him to persecute a person who differs from him in faith.

My readers will easily comprehend that it is difficult to converse with such people, and still more difficult to preserve our peace and happiness in their society, without violating the love which we owe to all men, how corrupt and erring soever they be. If you wish to be capable of exercising the duties of this general love to the superstitious, you need but to comprehend that his errors deserve rather to awaken your pity than sensations of hatred and aversion, on account of their origin: For if you carefully inquire how they crept into his soul, you will find that generally it is no fault of his to be infected with them. Infantine and juvenile instruction, the example of parents, the zeal of teachers and governors, habit, want of a sufficient knowledge of the means of mental illumination, &c. &c. &c. are frequently the sole and inevitable causes of superstition. Reflect

only upon your own experience and you will be sensible of the truth of this assertion. Do you not find that children are very willing to believe whatever their parents or instructors tell them of subjects of which they can have no sensible perception? If they for instance tell them from their infantine years, that all the objects which they see as well as themselves were created by a good God; that he is omnipresent, preserves, blesses and loves all animated beings, though he cannot be seen, &c. &c. &c.; if all those that are about them say and believe the same and repeat it frequently with serious looks, and if they at the same time tell them with marks of horror, that there are people who do not believe in a Supreme Being; do you think that it will be *possible* these children should not believe firmly in the existence of God? and abhor all those as wicked people or fools who are of a contrary opinion? If errors be inculcated into their ductile mind in the same manner they will impress themselves as deeply upon their soul as truth, and gradually become the most invincible prejudice.—What merit is it therefore in an adult person to have a firm conviction of truth? and how can it be imputed to another as a fault, with the least colour of justice, if he be preju-



diced for errors which have been instilled into his mind in his youth by those that had the direction of his education? You will perhaps object that such a person ought to examine his erroneous notions when he has attained to years of discretion. But how can a person do this without being actuated by some motive or other? And what motive can a person have to suspect the truth of a doctrine of which he is as firmly convinced as he is of the reality of his existence? Is it not natural that a person who is to examine a doctrine which he believes, should first think it possible that it may be erroneous? But if he think it impossible he cannot be reasonably expected to examine it. From this it appears that the superstition of many people is very excusable, and that those who are infected with it have a just claim to our forbearance. It would therefore be as unjust and inhumane to *hate* a man for his superstition as it would be to hate an other because he is infected with some constitutional disease. The superstitious is therefore justly intitled to compassion, and we ought to tolerate him with fraternal love.

It is your duty to *spare* his weak side, and to avoid as much as possible introducing discourses which may give him pain. If you be desirous

to correct the errors of one of your superstitious brethren you ought to do it with *modesty*. If you wish to succeed you must not declare directly his opinion to be erroneous. The surest way of convincing him will be to start amicable objections to his ideas, and to lead him to think that you wish to be better informed by him. Request him to refute your doubts, and he will afford you a natural opportunity to point out the weakness of his arguments; but should he nevertheless remain stubborn and perhaps grow insolent, your own sense of equity will tell you that it is not becoming a wise man to abuse a person, because he is *incapable* to comprehend truth. Endeavour to gain his *confidence* by doing justice to the zeal with which he defends his opinion, and by convincing him that you do not differ from him with regard to the essential points of religion, and that those tenets in which you do not agree with him are not materially connected with virtue and piety. When you have gained his confidence you must not attack his superstition directly but indirectly; for if you tell him plainly that the tenets for which he entertains the highest regard be false, he will be terrified and abhor you as a dangerous man. All religious superstition is founded in part on the

idea, that the tenets which its votaries have adopted are indispensably necessary for obtaining the favour of the Supreme Being and eternal happiness, and partly on contempt of reason. Endeavour therefore to convince the superstitious that Reason is the principal gift of God, and that we must account to the Supreme Being for our neglecting the use of it; that without the assistance of its light we should be incapable of understanding even revelation, and that mankind owes to its heavenly influence the greatest blessings. You then may proceed farther, and prove to him that his tenets are not indispensably necessary for obtaining the favour of God and eternal happiness; that God will neither reward nor punish men for their faith, but only for their works, &c. &c. &c. This will mitigate the anxious obstinacy with which he defends his superstitious opinions; and when he begins to comprehend that people who differ from him in faith may also be good men, and to value reason properly, you may safely venture to communicate your arguments modestly to him. But I must caution you to do it always when he is cool and when you are without witnesses, and you will certainly be capable of removing his errors, or at least render

them less burdensome and distressing to yourself.

§ XXXI. DEISTS, *Freethinkers* and *Scoffers* of religion of the common class are generally not more tolerant than their antipodes, the devotees. A man who is so unfortunate as not to be capable of convincing himself of the truth, the sanetity and necessity of the Christian Religion deserves *pity*, because he is destitute of a very essential happiness, and of a powerful comfort in life and death. He deserves more than pity; he has a just claim to our regard and love if he perform as well as he can his duties as a man and a citizen, and disturb no one in his belief; but if a person be a *scoffer* of religion rather from depravity of heart than from perverseness of understanding, or only pretends to hold religion in contempt, hunts after proselytes, and attacks publiely with hacknied witticisms that doctrine upon which millions found their only hope, their temporal and eternal happiness; if he persecute, despise, censure and brand with the name of a hypocrite every one that differs from him in opinion, such a depraved fool deserves to be treated with contempt.

§ XXXII. OF the manner in which *melancholy* people, *lunatics* and *madmen* should be

treated I can say but very little, as I do not possess sufficient medical knowledge to be able to point out the best method. This subject properly belongs to the department of the philosophical physician, and besides would take up too much room in this little work. I shall therefore give only a few hints concerning this point.

It appears to me to be a matter of the last importance with regard to people that are afflicted with mental distempers, to find out the primary source of their disease, and to ascertain whether it has been occasioned by a disorder in particular organs of the body, or by a peculiar disposition of the mind, violent passions or misfortunes. For that purpose you must observe what objects particularly occupy their imagination while they are raving or disordered, as well as after the paroxysm has subsided; and likewise on what their fancy chiefly broods: it then will appear that it frequently is possible to cure these unfortunate people gradually, if their mind can but be recalled from a single fixed idea, or if this can only be modified properly. It is further highly important to observe what particular change of weather, of the seasons and of the moon has the greatest influence upon their dis-



order, which will enable you to avail yourself of those moments which are most favourable for attempting a cure. I have also observed that confinement and every sort of harsh treatment generally serves only to make the evil worse. On this occasion I cannot help expressing my admiration of the madhouse at Frankfort on the Mein, which I have had many opportunities of observing. The disordered persons who are received in that institution, are suffered to walk about in the house and the garden whenever it can be done with safety, at least in those seasons in which their disease is less violent.

Their keepers treat them with so much mildness that many of them after a few years quit the house again entirely cured, and a greater number remain at most only melancholy, so as to be capable of performing manual work; whereas these people in many other hospitals, perhaps would have been rendered mad in the highest degree by close confinement and hard treatment.

People of weak understandings may also be disordered in their intellects, if a violent passion by which they are ruled, be nourished, excited and irritated. I remember to have seen two such miserable beings: one of them possessed in his youth an excellent understanding, great



ability and wit, traces of which were still visible when he enjoyed calmer moments.- He was to have studied the law but had learnt nothing, and abandoned himself to a profligate life. On returning to his native town he was treated as an ignorant idler, and was conscious of his deserving it. Yet he possessed an uncommon pride and was not quite poor. Forsaken by his family and shunned by his equals, he began to form connexions with the court officers of the Prince of \*\*\*. His jocose sallies at length introduced him to the notice of the Prince himself. He soon became very familiar with the latter, and the whole court flattered his vanity. This familiarity terminated however in his being abused and treated as a privileged merry-maker. Yet this was still a sort of existence which pleased him, while he was not abused too much and at liberty to converse familiarly with people of rank, and to tell them sometimes severe truths. But as the latter were not inclined to condescend too much to him for nothing, and likewise not always disposed to listen patiently to his witticisms, which frequently were rather coarse, he experienced sometimes very humiliating treatment and even corporeal chastisement, yet could not relinquish his disgraceful career, because his

relations and acquaintances held him in extreme contempt, and his little fortune was totally spent. Thus he sunk deeper and deeper every day, and at last grew entirely dependent on the court. The Prince caused a parti-coloured jacket to be made for him, and there was not even a scullion in the palace that did not think himself intitled to pass a joke upon him, or to pull him by the nose for a pint of wine. Despair now urged him to get drunk every day, and if ever he happened to be sober, the idea of his dreadful situation, the consciousness of the mean part which he acted, the aversion from inventing new jokes to preserve his place, and his awakening pride tormented his mind, while he ruined his constitution by excesses. His intellects became actually disordered, and at one time he was so mad as to render it necessary to chain him. At the time I saw him he was an old man, reduced to a most lamentable situation. He was treated as a frantic person, and regarded rather as an object of aversion than of pity. He enjoyed however, at times, some lucid intervals, in which he betrayed an uncommon degree of penetration, wit and genius; and when he wanted to obtain a charitable gift he could flatter in the most artful and insinuating man-

ner, and displayed so much dexterity in taking advantage of the weakness of others, so much practical knowledge of the human heart, that I knew not whether I ought to sigh more at those that had reduced him to this terrible state or at his own deviations.

The other person of whom I am about to speak was once steward in a nobleman's family, but on my first seeing him he lived upon a pension. As he was of no further use to his master, he as well as his family and domestics amused themselves with his pride and amorous disposition. They called him *Your Highness*, gave him an order, forged letters of Princes and Kings, in which he was informed that he was of an illustrious family, and had been kidnapped in his infancy ; that the Turkish Emperor who had usurped his dominions, wanted to have him assassinated, and that a Grecian Princess was in love with him. Some friends of the family disguised themselves as Ambassadors, and pretended to have been sent to enter into negotiations with him. In short, after a few years the intellects of the poor fellow were entirely disordered, and he believed all this nonsense seriously.

I forbear to make any comments on these

two lamentable facts, as the reader will easily be able to judge in what light they ought to be viewed.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### *On the Conversation with People of a different Age.*

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#### SECTION I.

THE conversation with people who are of the same age with us seems indeed to have many advantages and charms. A congenial manner of thinking, and a reciprocal exchange of such ideas as interest the attention of both parties in an equal degree, unite men more strongly to each other : certain inclinations and desires are peculiar to every different age ; the disposition changes in the course of time ; we do not keep pace with the change of taste and fashion ; the heart grows colder and takes less interest in new objects ; our imagination and vivacity cools ; many happy delusions have disappeared ; numberless objects that were dear to us have passed away and are no more ; the

partners in our juvenile pleasures are gone to their eternal home, and the youth around us attend only out of civility to our accounts of the pleasures of our happier days. Congenial experience affords more matter for conversation than events which are entirely foreign to those with whom we converse. All this cannot be disputed; yet disparity of temper, of education, fate and occupation frequently expand or contract these boundaries. Many people remain in some degree for ever children, while others grow old men before their time. The rake who has ruined his body and soul and satiated himself by all sorts of sensual gratification, naturally finds very little pleasure in the society of young and innocent country people, who have not yet lost their sense for artless joys; and an old country gentleman who has never travelled farther from his home than thirty or forty miles, is as little comfortable and happy in a circle of experienced and polished inhabitants of the capital as an aged Capuchin would be in a society of hoary literati. On the other hand it cannot be denied that many fashionable passions, as for instance, those for hunting, gambling, drinking and backbiting frequently unite old men and youths, aged women and

young girls in the most cordial manner. This exception from the above observation, that the conversation between people who are of the same age has many advantages and charms, cannot depreciate the value of the rules which we are about to give with regard to the conversation between people of a different age; *we* only beg leave to make one remark more: An over-scrupulous separation of people of different years, which is established in most great families of this country, where young people are rarely admitted to companies which are composed of persons of a maturer age before they have completed a certain number of years, is extremely hurtful. The tone which young people adopt if constantly left to themselves, is generally not the best; their manners are not improved, and a certain awkward timidity and bashfulness takes possession of their mind, which frequently renders them extremely ridiculous when they are first introduced into mixed societies; besides, old people are confirmed in their egotisms, grow intolerant and morose to their children, if they constantly be in company only with such persons as make a common cause with them, as soon as they begin to extol former times at the



expeñce of the present age, the tone of which they do not know.

§ II. OLD people very rarely are just enough to put themselves in the place of younger persons, but leave them undisturbed in the enjoyment of their innocent sports, without a wish to promote them by joining in these youthful pleasures. They reflect not on their own juvenile years, and thus it happens that old people generally desire young men should be as sedate, sober and reflecting as themselves, and shew the same coolness, moderation and prudence which experience and the change which nature has produced in *their* temper, teaches *them* to display. Juvenile sports appear unimportant to them, and the gambols of youth are considered by them as thoughtless wantonness. It is however extremely difficult for old people to recal to their recollection the situation and state of mind in which they were twenty or thirty years before, and this causes them to be often highly unjust in their judgment, and to commit many errors in the education of their children. Oh ! let us remain young as long as possible, and when the winter of life bleaches our hair, when the blood creeps slower through our veins and our heart grows cooler, look down

with sympathetic pleasure upon our younger brethren who are gathering vernal roses, while we are seated by the paternal fire-side, to rest from the toils of life and to warm our chilling blood ! Let us not preach down by severe and frigid reasoning the sweet pleasures of youthful fancy ! When we look back upon those happy days in which a single smile from the enchanting virgin who now is a withering matron enraptured us with heavenly bliss ; in which music and dancing thrilled every nerve of our frame with pleasure ; in which merriment and the sallies of wit dispelled every gloomy thought, and sweet dreams of future felicity, pleasing bodings and rosy hopes cheered our existence. Oh ! then let us prolong that happy period to our children, and participate as much as possible in their juvenile raptures. Infants and children, youths and blooming virgins will then croud around the cheerful old man who encourages their innocent mirth. When a young man I was connected with such *amiable* old ladies, whose society, had it been in my option, I would have preferred on the journey through life to that of many a handsome and blooming girl ; and when I chanced to be seated at a convivial feast by the side of a dull beauty, I

I frequently envied the man who was placed near a cheerful old woman.

§ III. By recommending such a good-natured condescension to the disposition of youth, I however do not mean to infer, that an old man can be excused if he forget his dignity so far as to act the contemptible part of a gay fop or a professed merryman; or that it is becoming a woman who has nearly completed half a century to dress like a young girl, to practise the despicable arts of coquetry, or to rival the younger part of her sex in their amorous conquests. Such a breach of decorum produces contempt, and justly deserves it. People of a certain age ought never to give an opportunity to youth of ridiculing them, or to neglect paying them that regard to which they are intitled by their riper years.

§ IV. It is however not sufficient that the society of old people be not burdensome and offensive to youth; it ought also to be useful to them. A greater share of experience obliges the former to instruct and to guide the latter, and to lead them in the path of virtue and happiness by their advice and example. This however must be done without pedantry, pride and presumption; without a ridiculous predi-

lection for every thing that is old ; without demanding a sacrifice of all jûvenile pleasures ; without intrusion or creating tediousness. I rather would advise old people to let their society be courted, which undoubtedly will be the case ; because well-disposed youths are wont to think it an honour to be permitted to converse with cheerful and sensible old men, and the society of such as shew that they have seen and experienced a great deal has always sufficient charms.

§ V. Thus much on the conduct of old people towards the young. I now shall add a few words on the conversation of youth with men and old people.

Many sensations which nature has impressed on the soul are reasoned away in our enlightened age, which is so carefully cleared of all the rubbish of antiquated prejudices. One of these prejudices is the sense of regard for hoary age. Our youth ripen sooner, grow sooner wise and learned than those of former times did. They repair by diligent reading, particularly of magazines, pamphlets and novels their want of experience and study. This renders them so intelligent as to be able to decide upon subjects which our forefathers thought could only be

clearly comprehended after a close and studious application of many years. Thence arises that noble self-sufficiency and confidence which inferior geniuses mistake for impudence and arrogance, that consciousness of internal worth with which the beardless boys of our age look down upon old men, and decry every thing that happens to come in their way. The utmost that a man of riper years may expect now-a-days from his children and grand children is, kind indulgence, chastising censure, being tutored by them and pitied, because he is so unfortunate as not to have been born in our happy age, in which wisdom rains from Heaven, unsown and uncultivated, like the manna in the desert.

§ VI. THERE are many things in this world which can be learnt only by experience ; there are sciences which absolutely require close and long study, reiterated reflection and meditation, coolness of temper and mature judgment ; and therefore I think the most brilliant and acute genius in most cases ought to pay some attention and deference to an old man, whose inferiority of faculties is compensated by age and experience. It must be acknowledged in general, that the store of experience which a



man gathers in a long course of years enables him to fix his ideas, to awaken from ideal dreams, to avoid being led astray by a lively imagination, the warmth of blood and the irritability of nerves, and to behold the objects with which he is surrounded in their proper point of view. It is besides so noble and amiable to render the latter days of the pilgrimage of life, in which cares and sorrows generally encrease and enjoyment takes its flight, as easy as possible to those that soon are to bid an eternal farewell to the treasures and gratifications of this world, that I feel myself impelled to exclaim with additional energy to youth of every description—"Rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old. Court the society of old and experienced people! Do not despise the counsel of cool reason, nor the advice of experience. Treat the hoary as you wish to be treated when your hair shall be bleached by old age. Respect them and do not desert them, when wild and thoughtless youths shun their company."

As for the rest, it cannot be denied that there are many *old* fools, as there are also wise *young* men who have earned already when others scarcely have begun to sow.



§ VII. THE conversation with children is highly interesting to a sensible man. He beholds in them the book of nature in an uncorrupted edition. Children appear as they really are, and as they are not misled by systems, passions or learning, judge of many things better than grown persons; they receive many impressions much sooner, and are not guided by so many prejudices as the latter. In short, if you wish to study men you must not neglect to mix with the society of children. However, the conversation with them requires considerations which are not necessary in the society of people of maturer years.

It is a sacred duty to give them no offence whatever, to abstain in their company from all wanton discourses and actions, and to display in their presence benevolence, faith, sincerity, decency and every other virtue; in short, to contribute as much as possible to their improvement; for their ductile and uncorrupted mind is as ready to receive good impressions as it is open to the seeds of vice, and I may safely maintain that the degeneracy of mankind is greatly owing to the imprudence and inconsideration with which people of a maturer age deport themselves in the presence of children,

Let therefore all your discourses and actions be graced with truth when you are in their society. Condescend in a becoming manner to that tone which is intelligible to them, carefully avoid teasing and vexing them, as is the custom of many people ; for this has the most lamentable effect upon their character.

Good-natured children are attracted by a secret and peculiar sense to benevolent and amiable people, though they should not take much notice of them ; whereas they shun others that are of a less commendable disposition, notwithstanding their endeavours to ingratiate themselves with them. Purity and innocence of heart is the talisman by which they are charmed.

It is very natural that parents should be fond of their children, it is therefore prudent to pay some attention to the latter if we wish to gain the favour of the former. By this however I do not mean to infer that it is right to flatter the spoiled children of the Great, thus to nourish the vanity, pride, and peevishness of these generally already but too corrupted beings, to contribute to their moral degeneracy and to transgress the principal law of nature, which ordains that the child shall pay homage to the man of maturer years.

Above all things I would advise you not to interfere if parents in your presence reprimand their children, by taking the part of the latter, for this will make them believe that their parents are in the wrong, diminish their filial love, confirm them in their disobedience, and intrude upon the plan of education laid down by the former.

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## CHAPTER V.

### *On the Conversation between Parents, Children and Relations.*

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#### SECTION I.

THE first and most natural bond that unites men with men, after the connexion subsisting between husband and wife, is the tie which connects parents to their children. Although propagating the species be not intended to serve for the benefit of the future generation, yet there are but very few that are not perfectly pleased with the reality of their existence; and notwithstanding parents who live in chris-

tian states do not educate, nourish and bring up their children merely from a voluntary choice, yet it would be highly absurd to deny that the numerous troubles and cares which this produces impose the most sacred obligations upon the latter; or to maintain that no impulse of benevolence, sympathy and affection attaches those to us whose flesh and blood we are, who have nursed and cherished us, cared for us and shared all their comforts with us.

Immediately after the union between parents and children, follows the connexion subsisting between the different branches of one family. The members of the same family being united and rendered harmonious by a similarity of organisation, and education, as well as by a common interest, feel for each other what they do not for strangers; and they estrange themselves from the rest of human society in the same proportion in which the circle of their family encreases.

Patriotism is a more compound sensation, but still more cordial and warm than cosmopolitism in a man who has been early ejected from civil society, and wandering as an adventurer from country to country, has no property and no relish of social duties. A person who does

not love the mother from whose breast he has drawn nourishment, whose heart is not warmed at the sight of the place in which he has cheerfully spent the innocent and happy days of his youth; cannot possibly take a lively interest in the welfare of the whole, because property, morality, and every thing that can be dear to man in this world rests, in fact, upon the preservation of the bonds that unite us to our country and family.

These bonds growing looser every day, prove that we decline more and more from the excellent order of nature and its laws; and if a turbulent genius whom his country expels, because he refuses to submit to its laws, in his indignation at the restraint which morality and the police impose upon him, maintain that it is becoming a philosopher to dissolve all closer connexions, and to acknowledge no other bonds than those of general philanthropy, this proves only that in our times even the most singular and extravagant principle must serve as a main pillar of some philosophical system.—Happy eighteenth century, in which such great discoveries are made,—as for instance: that we may learn to read without being acquainted with letters and syllables, and that we may love the



whole human race without loving individuals ! Century of universal medicines, of philalethes, philanthropists and cosmopolites, whither wilt thou lead us at last ? General illumination will spread over all ranks ; the husbandman will let his plough stand idle, and read to Princes lectures on liberty and equality, and on their obligation to share the drudgeries of life with him : every one will attempt to reason down all prejudices that stand in his way ; laws and civil regulations will be superseded by license ; the powerful and the better-instructed will reclaim his right of superiority, and follow his impulse to care for the best of the whole world at the expence of his weaker brethren ; property, constitutions and political restrictions will cease to be respected, every one will be his own ruler, and invent a system of his own to gratify his desires.—Oh ! happy, golden age ! We then shall be but *one* family, shall press the noble and amiable cannibal to our heart, and, if that general benevolence should spread farther, walk through life hand in hand with the witty and sensible Ourang-Outang. Then all fetters will be broken and all prejudices dispelled. We then shall not be bound to pay the debts of our fathers, nor to be satisfied with one wife, and



the lock of our neighbour's strong box will prevent us no longer from making good our innate right to the gold which all-bountiful nature produces for general use.

We happily are not yet arrived thus far ; and as there still exists a great number who as well as myself love their relations, have a relish for domestic happiness, and cherish family-bonds, it will not be superfluous to subjoin a few remarks on the conversation with near relations. There are parents who, living in a continual round of amusements, scarcely see their children once in a day, gratify their propensity for pleasure while hirelings are intrusted with the education of their sons and daughters, and when they are grown up, live with them on such a cool and civil footing as though they were not at all connected with them. It is unnecessary to prove that this conduct is highly unnatural and unwarrantable. There are also other parents who demand of their children such a slavish submission and so many considerations and sacrifices, that the restraint and shyness which their tyranny creates destroy all confidence and tender intercourse in such a degree, as to render the hours which children must spend in the company of their parents extremely heavy and

dreadful to them. Others likewise intirely forget that boys attain the age of manhood, and treat their adult sons and daughters as if they still were babes, not indulging them with even the least liberty of choice, and will leave nothing at all to their own judgment. This is extremely wrong and imprudent. Respect does not consist in rigorous awe, but can exist extremely well with a confidential and familiar intercourse. We do not love a person to whom we scarcely dare to look up, nor do we communicate ourselves to those that always are preaching up severe laws, because restraint and coercion destroy all open and voluntary communication. What can be more charming than to behold a tender father in the circle of his adult children, who pant after his wise and chearful conversation, conceal none of their inmost wishes from him, who is their counsellor, their most indulgent friend and shares in their innocent juvenile sports; or at least does not interrupt them, and lives with them as his best and natural friends! An union for which all the feelings that can be dear to man incessantly plead, namely, the voice of nature, of sympathy, and of gratitude; similarity of taste and of interest, and the habit of mutual intercourse. This familiarity is,

however, often carried too far. I know parents who render themselves despicable by participating in the excess of their children, or by neglecting to conceal their own vices, and thereby provoke the ridicule and contempt of those to whom they ought to set a good example.

§ III. It is not uncommon in our days to see children neglect their parents or even treat them ill. The principal ties of human society grow laxer every day; young men think that their fathers are not wise, entertaining and enlightened enough, and girls yawn in the company of their hoary mother, not reflecting how many tedious hours their parent spent at their cradle in attending and nursing them when they were stretched on the sick-bed, or in performing the most disagreeable and offensive labours, to render them comfortable and to ease their pains, and that she denied herself many pleasures to take care of the little helpless, *unclean* being, who without her tender attendance perhaps would have perished. Children forget but too often how many chearful hours they have unbittered to their parents by their stunning clamour, how many sleepless nights they have caused to their careful father who exerted himself to the utmost of his abilities to provide for

his family, and was obliged to deny himself many comforts for their benefit. Well-disposed minds however will never be so totally devoid of all sense of gratitude as to be in want of my advice, and for mean and unfeeling souls I do not write. It is only necessary to observe, that if children really should have reason to be ashamed of the weakness or the vices of their parents, they will do much better to conceal their defects as much as possible than to neglect paying them that external regard which they owe them in many respects. The blessings of Heaven and the approbation of all good men are the certain rewards of the attention which sons and daughters pay to the comfort and happiness of their parents. It is a great misfortune to a child to be tempted by the discord in which his parents live, or by other causes, to take the part of one against the other. Prudent parents however will carefully avoid involving their children in such altercations; and on such occasions good children will behave with that circumspection and tenderness which probity and prudence require.

§ IV. We often hear people complain that more assistance, kindness and protection may be expected from strangers than from the nearest

relations; but I think this complaint to be generally unjust and unfounded. There are certainly uncharitable people to be found amongst our relations as well as amongst those that are not connected with us by the ties of blood. It cannot be denied that relations frequently pay regard to their kindred only if they are rich or honoured by the multitude, but are ashamed of their obscure, poor or persecuted relatives; I think however that many demand of their uncles, aunts and cousins more than they ought to do. Our political situation, the rapid encrease of luxury, and the enormous load of taxes with which we are burthened, render it highly necessary for every prudent man to confine his principal care to the maintenance of his wife and children, and the cousins, nephews and nieces who frequently rely entirely on the assistance of their powerful and wealthy relations, neglect to render themselves capable of providing for themselves, and squander away their time and money, have but too often such heavy and unreasonable demands upon their kindred, as render it impossible for a man who is not callous to the voice of his duty and conscience, to realize their expectations without being unjust to others. In order to avoid these

disagreeable collisions, I advise you not to slight that cordial and confidential intercourse which renders our connexion with relations so highly agreeable, but at the same time to entertain and excite as little expectation as possible of obtaining assistance and protection from relatives ; to assist your kindred as much as you can without being unjust to better people ; but to avoid carefully pushing the fortune of your ignorant and undeserving relations, and procuring places for them to the injury of worthy and meritorious strangers, as this will render you extremely odious and create you more enemies than friends.

Relations, as well as married people and friends, as we shall state more at large in a future page, ought to observe that persons who know each other more intimately, and see one another frequently without disguise, must be particularly circumspect in their conduct to avoid growing tired of each other, and overlooking great merits on account of trifling defects.

It is finally to be wished, that the members of large families in the middle station would not continually associate only with their relations ; for this divides human society into too many separate parties ; those that are not connected



with them by the ties of blood are kept at a distance, and if a stranger happen to drop into their circle he finds himself very awkwardly situated.

§ V. Old uncles and aunts, particularly such as are married, are very apt to scold, to vent their gouty and hysteric humours at their nephews and nieces, and to treat them as if they were still in leading strings, which is highly unjust and imprudent. Such conduct has rendered them proverbial, and a trifling legacy is too dearly bought if we must patiently listen to continual somniferous and useless lectures; whereas these good old folks would be greatly loved and tenderly treated by their young relations, if they were prudent enough to be less morose in their conduct.

§ VI. We frequently find incivilities, and particularly in large manufacturing towns, an extremely stiff and insupportable tone amongst persons who belong to one family. Civil, œconomical and other considerations render it necessary for them to see each other often, notwithstanding which they constantly quarrel, teaze, vex and hate one another, and thus imbitter their life. If you cannot sympathise with your relations, you ought at least to treat them civilly, and to

abstain from making their life miserable by continual altercation, which only tends to render them more spiteful, instead of reconciling their animosity and rancour; whereas you may be certain of rendering your intercourse with them less burthensome and painful by forbearance and kindness: for nothing is more apt to blunt the edge of enmity and discord than returning good for evil, and preserving an unshaken equanimity of temper.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

##### *On Conjugal Conversation.*

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#### SECTION I.

A WISE and good choice in concluding the most important bond of human life, is undoubtedly the safest means by which married people can render their connexion happy and cheerful. If, however, people who do not contribute mutually to sweeten the life of each other, and to render its burthens less onerous, but on the contrary are swayed by opposite inclinations and

wishes, and guided by different reasons, unfortunately have contracted an indissoluble union, this really is a truly miserable situation, and an existence replete with continual sacrifices, a state of dire necessity from which death only can release the hapless sufferer.

This bond is no less unfortunate if dissatisfaction and aversion be only on one side, if the matrimonial tie has not been connected by voluntary choice, but on account of political or economical considerations, or occasioned by coercion, despair, distress, gratitude, by accident or a transient whim, or mere sensual desire in which the heart was not interested; if one party always expect to receive and never will give, demanding continually to have all wants and wishes gratified, claim constantly advice, assistance, attention, diversion, pleasure and comfort, and will do nothing in return. Be therefore careful how you choose a partner for life, if you do not wish to leave your whole future domestic happiness to the faithless and deceiving favour of chance.

§ II. IF we, however, consider that even those marriages which depend on voluntary choice, generally are concluded in an age and under circumstances in which man is determi-

ned rather by blind passion and natural instinct than by mature consideration and reason, although he dream and talk in that state of delusion of a great deal of sympathy and fondness we should rather be astonished that there are still so many happy couples in the world. Kind Providence has, however, regulated every thing so wisely, that our happiness frequently is promoted by what seems to be most contrary to it. The mischief arising from our incapacity to choose properly in our juvenile years is happily counterpoised by our being more pliable, ductile and accommodating in that age than in the years of maturity. The rough edges are smoothed easier when the mass is yet soft and pliable than when it is hardened. We are less difficult in our younger years than when experience has rendered us nicer and more cautious, and excited great expectations in our soul; when our cooler reason anatomizes every thing more carefully, and every interruption of our enjoyment is accounted a great loss, because the reflection on the space we have run through reminds us forcibly of the short period we may expect to live, and actuates us to husband our time and pleasure more carefully. If differences arise between a young couple, they are also soon reconciled

again : aversion and hatred do not root so deeply, and while the senses maintain their right in full force, the most violent matrimonial dissensions are frequently terminated by a single conjugal embrace. To this we must add that habit, common interest, domestic occupations, which leave us little time to abandon ourselves to idle fantasies, the pleasure which our children afford us, the mutual care of their education, and the joint concern for their future happiness contribute in those years, in which youth, vigour and activity animate us to ease the burden of the matrimonial yoke, and to afford us numerous and various pleasures which receive an additional relish from the share the faithful partner of our life takes in them. But we are of a different disposition when we have attained the age of maturity. We then demand more, are eager to earn and to enjoy, and disinclined to take new burthens on our shoulders ; the character has more firmness, we are unwilling to be new moulded, and our desires are less clamorous for gratification. There are but few exceptions from this rule, and these are to be found only among the better class of men, who, as they advance in years, grow more indulgent and gentle, and being firmly convinced of the ge-

neral frailty of human nature, demand little and are willing to give; but this is a kind of heroism, a noble self-denial, and we are speaking here of the *reciprocal* promotion of mutual happiness. I would therefore advise you to be particularly careful in the choice of a conjugal partner at that period of life, if such counsel be not superfluous; for people of a maturer age are generally more circumspect in this matter, and those who being *men* act like heedless youths, deserve to feel the consequences of their folly.

I do not believe that a perfect harmony of temper, disposition and thinking, of capacities and taste is necessarily required to constitute matrimonial happiness; the contrary may sometimes afford more felicity, if the disparity be not too great and extend not to essential principles. A bond that is founded on mutual interest, and in which all the troubles one party suffers equally affect the other, renders it frequently necessary that the too great vivacity, the rash impetuosity of the husband should be tempered by gentleness, and sometimes even by a little phlegma on the part of the wife, and *vice versa*, to prevent many heedless steps and their dangerous consequences. Many families would also be reduced to total ruin if man and wife were animated with



an equal propensity for splendour, luxury and extravagance; or for immoderate benevolence and sociability: and as our young novel readers commonly shape the ideal picture of their future partners after their own dear self, the interference of an old morose father or guardian is sometimes very beneficial to them.—Thus much on the choice of a partner, which is almost more than I ought to have said here.

§ IV. Married people who must see each other every day, and therefore have opportunities enow to get acquainted with each other's faults and humours, and suffer many inconveniences even from the most trifling of them, cannot be too circumspect in their conduct; and it is highly important for them to find out means of preventing their society from being troublesome and tedious to one another, and to guard against mutual indifference, coldness and aversion. Dissimulation is one of the worst expedients that can be adopted for that purpose; but nothing is more efficacious than a certain regard for our own person, and an unremitted care to avoid every thing that can produce bad impressions. I would therefore advise married people carefully to cultivate mutual civility, which is the true spirit and characteristic of conjugal familiarity, and at all times distinguishes a man of good breed-

ing. It is one of the principal requisites of matrimonial happiness to avoid growing tiresome in conversation, and endeavouring to enliven mutual intercourse as much as possible by a prudent change of subjects; as nothing tends more to render the society of those with whom we must live fastidious than harping constantly on the same string, and repeating the same discourse on every occasion. I know a married man who has related the small store of anecdotes and humorous stories which he possesses so often to his wife, and in her presence to strangers, that the vexation and irritability which they produce in her mind are but too apparently depicted in her countenance whenever he entertains his guests with those hacknied sallies. A person who reads good books, frequents polished societies and reflects upon what he reads, sees and hears, will find every day additional matter for interesting conversation; but this will certainly not be sufficient if he idle away the whole day by the side of his wife, and dedicate no time to useful occupation; he then will be obliged to beguile the tedious hours by playing at cards, or in any other equally insipid manner, if he can meet with no other company; or have recourse to what is still more to be deprecated, the temptation of

quarrelling with his consort by way of amusement. It is therefore very salutary if the husband have some regular employment, which fixes him at least for some hours every day to his writing desk, or calls him abroad; or if a short absence should occasionally intervene, which rarely fails giving new relish to the society of his wife; during which period he is wishfully expected by his faithful partner, who carefully directed his domestic affairs whilst the tenderest anxiety has been expressed for his safety and presence: on his return she receives him joyfully; when the evenings glide imperceptibly away amid chearful discourses and consultations relating to the welfare of his family, and in consequence the matrimonial happiness of both is not poisoned by satiety. I would therefore advise those that wish to excite a new relish to their conjugal bliss, to separate themselves now and then for a short period from the object of their love, by going a journey, and thus give a new zest to connubial enjoyments. It is also requisite that those who desire to preserve each other's regard, should avoid every thing which can render their person disagreeable in the eyes of the object of their tenderest affection, and particularly uncleanness of dress and impro-

priety of conduct. Those that live in the country in particular, cannot be too careful to avoid all rustic airs, expressions and manners, as well as every neglect of their person: for how is it possible a wife, who discovers more defects and improprieties in her husband, with whom she constantly converses, than in other people should be partial to his society, and regard and love him more than others that display greater politeness and decorum? And how can the conjugal state afford her real happiness, if her feelings be constantly wounded, and her life prove an uninterrupted train of sacrifices and sufferings?

§ V. If you so punctually and carefully fulfil your duties, and act after such a regular and firm plan as to surpass if possible all your acquaintances, you may justly expect to be sincerely beloved by your wife, and finally preferred to all those that produce momentaneous impressions on her heart by single eminent qualities and accomplishments. But you must be careful to fulfil *all* these duties. A man who gets privately drunk once or twice every week, will derive but little benefit from his being capable to boast of his disinterestedness, diligence, œconomy and the respect paid him by good men; and the wife who neglects the education

of her children, will derive very little advantage from her chastity, which perhaps is principally owing to want of temptation or a cold disposition. If you claim regard and love as a duty, you must be careful to deserve it; and if you expect your wife should honour and love you more than any other man, you must not rest this expectation merely upon the promise which she has given you at the altar, but found it chiefly upon your unremitted endeavours to be better and more amiable in every respect than others. Vices and virtues can be classed only with regard to their consequences; for they all are in fact equally important, and a careless husband is as criminal as an unfaithful wife. Yet this is not the general way of thinking. We rail frequently against vices to which we are not inclined, and do not consider, that being inattentive to important virtues is as criminal as the commission of a bad action. An old woman persecutes with furious rage a poor young girl who has been betrayed by the warmth of her temper and the power of artful seduction into a false step, but does not think to deserve being censured for suffering her children to grow up like irrational brutes, because she has never committed an actual breach of her matrimonial

vows. A careful attention to *all* our conjugal duties, is therefore the safest and the only way to insure the attachment and love of our matrimonial partners.

§ VI. NOTWITHSTANDING this, amiable strangers may sometimes happen to make more favourable though transient impressions upon our consorts than are consistent with our peace. It is not to be expected that after the first blind love is evaporated, married people should continue to entertain such a partiality for each other as not to be sensible sometimes of the accomplishments of others. To this we must add, that people with whom we occasionally converse display only their bright side and are more apt to flatter us than those with whom we live. Impressions of this nature will however be soon obliterated, if the husband continue to fulfil his duties faithfully, and betray no symptoms of mean envy and foolish jealousy which never are of the least benefit, but always tend to produce bad consequences. Love and regard cannot be enforced nor obtained by harsh treatment; a heart that must be guarded is like the Mammon of the miser, rather an useless burthen than a real treasure which contributes to render us happy : opposition serves only to irritate; no watch-



fulness is so great as not to be liable to imposition; and it is natural for man to wish with additional ardour for a supposed good as soon as the attainment of it is seen to be attended with difficulties, which otherwise perhaps would have had no charm for him.

I would also advise you to scorn all those little artifices which may be excusable in lovers, but ought never to be practised by married people; as for instance, to excite jealousy in order to animate the passion of the beloved object with additional warmth. An union which must be founded on mutual regard is utterly incompatible with crooked means. If my wife unfortunately believe me to be capable of sacrificing my duty and conjugal affection to foreign inclinations, such practices will serve only to lessen her regard for me; and if she perceive that I only trifle with her, these artifices will be worse than fruitless, and may produce the most lamentable consequences.

I repeat it again: although the man should give his wife or the wife her husband some cause for uneasiness, yet this little deviation of the heart will not be of long duration, if the injured party continue faithfully to perform all matrimonial duties. The misguided wife, for in-

stance, will sooner or later say to herself in a moment of cool and dispassionate reflection : “ Although that man possess many amiable qualities and accomplishments, yet he is not connected with me by such tender ties as those that unite me with my husband—who shares all my cares, is the father and supporter of my children, and participates of all my joys and sorrows ; nor will he ever love me more tenderly than my faithful consort, who has already given me so many undoubted proofs of his forbearance and affection.” And such a triumph of returning love which must take place, sooner or later, obliterates all former sufferings.

§ VII. PRUDENCE and probity however require that we should arm ourselves against the impressions which the superior accomplishments of others can make on our heart. I would advise every one, therefore, to be particularly careful to avoid such dangerous opportunities in the earlier part of life, when the imagination and the passions are but too apt to take fire, and the heart so strongly inclined to rebel against the controul of sober reason. A young man who perceives that a woman with whom he frequently converses is likely to become dearer to him than his wife, and thereby kindle a wild

fire in his bosom, or at least imbitter his domestic happiness, will do well to drop all intercourse with her, lest her illicit society should become necessary to him. This rule of prudence ought to be particularly attended to in our conversation with the finer coquets who, without meditating any breach of honour, delight in sporting with the peace of an honest and feeling man, and are proud to cause sleepless nights, to provoke tears, and to excite the jealousy of other women. There are but too many vain females of this class, who are actuated not by a bad heart or a vitiated temper, but by an unbridled desire to shine and to be generally admired, and thus to disturb the domestic peace of many a married couple. People of a maturer age whose heart has attained more firmness, may safely adopt a different mode of conduct. A man of firm principles, who accounts to his understanding for the feelings of his heart, and aims at the possession of real happiness, will soon recover from the too favourable ideas which he may have formed of another person to the disadvantage of his wife, by seeing the former so frequently as to be able to observe that she has more defects than his faithful, loving and sensible wife. If he at the same time reflect upon the tender interest which

his consort takes in all his pleasures and sorrows, at the anxiety which she is wont to display for his happiness and comfort, and calls to his aid the reflection on the pledges of their mutual juvenile love, his heart will undoubtedly be eager voluntarily to return to the sweetest duties.

§ VIII. NOTHING is more absurd, nor can any thing render domestic life more burthensome and miserable than the foolish idea that married people, because they are wedded to each other, have a right to monopolize all the feelings of their partner, and to demand that no other good and amiable person shall be dear to the heart of their consort, that the husband must be dead to the worth of every other female, and that it is a breach of conjugal fidelity if the wife speak with warmth and admiration of another man, and delight in conversing with him. Such demands are doubly ridiculous and unjust, if one party be already obliged to sacrifice much to the other on account of the difference of disposition, or for other reasons. If in such a case the husband, for instance, endeavour to exhilarate himself in the company of amiable people, to forget his sufferings for a few moments, to raise and to warm his spirits, the wife rather ought to thank him for it, than to distress him

by foolish reproaches, to provoke his indignation; and to drive him to despair and the commission of actual injuries.

§ IX. THE choice of such friends as well as of pleasures and amusements must however be left to the heart and the taste of every individual. We have observed already, that a perfect similarity of temper, disposition and taste is not absolutely required for conjugal happiness. It would therefore be an insupportable slavery for either party to be obliged to conform in all these points entirely with the disposition of the other. It is already hard enough for feeling people to be deprived of the pleasure of sharing with the partner of their life the noble and heart-elevating sentiments and impressions which are produced in their mind by good books, the fine arts and the like, because her soul is not susceptible of them; but to be obliged to deny ourselves every gratification of that nature, or to regulate the choice of our friends and conversation according to the unfeeling whims of a perverted head and a frigid heart, and to deprive ourselves of all the comforts that are congenial to our disposition and way of thinking—this is the highest degree of mental misery and worse than the torments of hell; and I need not to



add that the husband, who is designed by nature and the civil constitution to be the head and director of his family, and frequently is actuated by the most important reasons to cultivate this or that connexion, to choose this or that occupation, or to take steps which may appear singular to those that are unacquainted with his private motives, can be expected least to suffer himself to be controlled in such a manner. On the contrary, it contributes very much to render Social Life comfortable, if people who are united for ever by the most sacred ties, and bound to share reciprocally their joys and sorrows, endeavour to accustom themselves gradually to think and to feel congenially, and to render their taste harmonious ; and it is a proof of an almost brutish stupidity, of a despicable indolence, and frequently of the most vitiated will, if we, after having been united many years with a reasonable, polished, and loving being, still are as ignorant, raw, callous and obstinate as we were before. In that case tranquillity of mind, peace and happiness can abide no longer with us after the first rapture of love is evaporated, and the suffering party begins to be sensible of the consort's defects, and of the happiness which probably would have resulted from a connexion



with another person ; whereas tenderness and real regard will easily produce that harmony of soul in reasonable and sensible people, if not obstinacy or a revolting difference of thinking render the disparity irreconcilable.

§ X. BUT how are we to guard against an actual breach of conjugal fidelity ? How are we to arm ourselves when violence of temper, want of self-dominion, seduction, the arts of coquetry, beauty and opportunities on the one hand, tempt us to break the matrimonial vow ; and on the other we are repelled by the moroseness, bad temper, stupidity, sickness, deformity or the advanced age of our consort ? This book is not designed to be a system of morals ; I must therefore leave it to every sensible reader to solve this delicate query as well as he can, and to consider by what means he can acquire a proper dominion over his passions, and avoid dangerous opportunities and temptations, which indeed is not so easily effected in certain situations and relations as many people may think, particularly if we be young. I shall however say as much on this head as propriety and the plan of this work will permit.

If you be desirous to avoid the commission of an actual breach of fidelity, I would advise you

not to accustom yourself and your wife to excess in the enjoyment of your matrimonial rights, to voluptuousness, effeminacy and intemperance, and thus to prevent the corporeal wants and desires growing too violent. It is . . further highly necessary for married people to be chaste; delicate and modest in the dispensation of their matrimonial favours, to avoid disgust, satiety and faunish lust. A kiss is a—kiss; and it will generally be the wife's fault if a sensible husband be eager to obtain that kiss (which he can receive without trouble and in an honourable way from the pure and glowing lips of his helpmate) from a stranger, contrary to his duty and the laws of decency, and *vice versa*. Should you perceive that your consort is charmed by the power of novelty, you may turn that weakness to your advantage by being more parsimonious in the dispensation of your matrimonial favours, and give a new zest to conjugal desires by occasional continence and other impediments thrown into the way of your partner's sensual gratifications.

XI. It undoubtedly is a most painful step to dissolve an union with a person who has been dear to us, and was once the idol of our wishes. A man of sense, who knows from experience

the lamentable consequences which generally attend divorces, will therefore first try all other means before he resolves to separate himself from the faithless partner of his bed, and rather take all possible pains to reform and recal her to her duty than have recourse to that distressing expedient.

There are two means of effecting that laudable purpose, which is highly becoming a man who possesses a feeling heart and a generous disposition of mind.

*Gentle and prudent* treatment is the first means which I would advise an husband to apply if he find that his wife be inclined to deviate from the path of her matrimonial duty. Harsh and galling reproaches, and all manner of violence will only serve to widen the breach; whereas mild and kind treatment will frequently be sufficient to recal a frail wife from the road to her own and her husband's ruin. But if you wish to succeed, your endeavours to treat her with gentleness must be entirely unaffected, and not tinged with the least symptom of stifled indignation or secret anger; for it will be entirely out of your power to reclaim her to her duty if she perceive that your conduct be the effect of art. Prudence requires farther,

that you should display sorrow and grief whenever you surprise her in the act of deviating from her matrimonial obligations, and to avoid carefully betraying the least sign of fretfulness or hatred, as such conduct would only serve to confirm her in the pursuit of her lawless career, and to alienate her heart more from you, because some people find a pleasure in provoking the passions of others, whereas no one that has the least spark of sensibility left can delight in giving pain. If you continue to proceed in this gentle and prudent manner for some time, you will have the satisfaction to convince her of the goodness of your heart, to insure her regard, to make her regret the pain and grief which she causes you by her weakness, and *then* only can you safely try the second means, and *remonstrate* with her on the *impropriety* of her conduct. But if you really be desirous this step should be crowned with success you must never lose sight of the following rules :

First of all you must, as we have already observed, *impress her with a favourable idea of yourself*; for if your erring wife has no regard for you, and suspects your heart or principles, remonstrances will only render bad worse. But if you have gained her good opinion, if she

esteem the goodness of your heart, and be affected by your generous conduct, you may safely venture to speak a word of admonition to her, and to remind her of the impropriety and injustice of her behaviour. This must however be done *mildly* and in a *convincing* manner. You must remonstrate with her in a kind and affectionate strain, call her deviation by a gentle name, appeal to the many proofs of your sincere affection for her which she has received, point out indubitable instances of her transgression of her duty, as well as the lamentable consequences that may result from a continuation of it, and paint with lively colours the sufferings which you have patiently borne. It is however absolutely necessary you should not do this in the presence of witnesses, but in private, to spare her the pain of seeing her weakness exposed; because every mortal is desirous to conceal his faults from the world, and our heart revolts and feels indignant sensations if others be informed, in our presence, of our weakness and defects. Rage and bitterness are in that case the usual consequences of such an imprudent indelicacy. I would further beg you to observe, that you must select for such remonstrances moments in which she is in a *good* humour.



Every mortal has his serene and gloomy hours, and the introduction of painful subjects at a time when the mind is pressed down by disagreeable ideas and sensations generally produce unpleasant consequences. If you be so fortunate to catch a propitious moment for remonstrating with your misguided consort, you must not neglect to do justice to the *merits* and *amiable qualities which she still possesses*. Whoever knows the nature of the human heart will be sensible, that it is of the last importance to pay attention to this rule. Man *wishes* to be good, and his mind revolts at the idea of thinking himself guilty. We are terrified at the charge of having rendered a fellow-creature miserable, feel ourselves degraded, and think that our whole character is ruined. Can you blame your wife if her heart revolt in such a trying moment; and will it not be necessary to remove or to prevent such an unfounded error? This you will do most successfully if you preface your remonstrance by speaking of your wife's *good* qualities, of her talents, the laudable features of her character, of the goodness of her heart and other accomplishments that claim your regard; in short, by doing justice to the merits which she possesses, and by representing her deviation



from her conjugal obligations as the *only* stain that disgraces her. This will soothe her mind, check her anger, and render her capable of listening patiently to your admonitions, and willing to follow your advice. The peace of your mind will certainly gain by such an attempt to recal your erring consort to her duty, though you should not succeed as well as you may wish ; for at least you will render her more cautious in her conduct, and have the satisfaction of having done on your part every thing that love and prudence can require.

§ XII. The charge of an *actual* commission of adultery is highly awful and pregnant with the most serious consequences ; it is therefore the sacred duty of every husband who thinks himself injured to inquire carefully and minutely, Whether it be founded merely on suspicion or on indubitable facts, before he takes any step to vindicate his marital rights. I would therefore advise every one that thinks he has reason to suspect his wife of disloyal practices, to take care not to give way to *unfounded presumption*, and not to infer from the seeming partiality of his consort for another man, or from her predilection for the society of an accomplished stranger, that she is unfaithful to

him. Much less ought he to rely upon the insinuations and dubious hints of pretended friends, or on the tales of antiquated gossips. Even our own experience ought to be suspicious to us in such a momentous case, if our observations have not been made with the greatest circumspection and coolness; for how often do we find that we heard and saw wrong, and repent too late of our hasty judgment! Even if your wife should grow rather cool in her conversation with you, you would do wrong in taxing her immediately with an improper attachment for another; as this may frequently be the effect of private sorrows or secret vexation, and sometimes of your own conduct.

Should you, however, think you have sufficient cause for suspicion, it will be prudent in you to institute the most impartial investigation, and to inquire only for such proofs as admit of no other interpretation. Justice and love ought to be your only guides in that painful task; and these require you should interpret all appearances which excite your suspicion in the most favourable manner, and with as much charity as possible. While there is the least possibility to deduce unfavourable appearances from any other cause than infidelity, your own peace

of mind requires you should not be too hasty in your judgment, but do as you would wish to be done by were you in the predicament of your suspected wife.

It is further a rule of prudence and justice, not to betray your suspicion to your faithless consort while you cannot yet substantiate it by the most incontrovertible proofs ; for it is the most unpardonable cruelty to afflict an innocent heart by such a dreadful suspicion ; and, besides, if you give vent to your suppositions, you will run the risk of inraging and exasperating your wife to such a degree as may actuate her to punish you by the commission of a crime which she otherwise, perhaps, would have abhorred. Such a cruel injury may also destroy the peace of an innocent heart for ever.

§ XIII. BUT how are you to act if you should be so unfortunate as to have *incontrovertible* proofs of your consort's guilt ? In that case, your own dignity, prudence, and charity demand of you not to torment her by contempt, reproaches, scorn, or similar humiliating treatment. For what would it avail you ? It would serve no other purpose than to plunge her deeper into guilt, and put it entirely out of your power to

recal her to virtue, and to save yourself from disgrace and sorrow.

Therefore avoid also divulging her crime, complaining of it to others, and so exposing her to public shame; because this would be the surest way of driving her to despair, of confirming her in the prosecution of her criminal course, and of poisoning the mind of your children.

Be *generous* and *humane* to your fallen consort; do not suffer your children or servants to neglect paying her the respect which they owe her; and avoid as much as possible doing any thing that could give her pain, particularly in the presence of strangers.

Neglect no opportunity to regain her love by kindness, by defending her person against those that speak ill of her, by paying a just tribute to her *good* qualities in her absence, by displaying a serene and chearful countenance in her presence, and speaking to her in a mild and conciliating tone; by convincing her that you take a lively interest in her concerns and sympathize with her sorrows, by affording her every pleasure and comfort that lies in your power, by consulting her on all affairs that concern her;

as well as endeavouring to please her by additional neatness in your dress and the like.

Examine your own conduct impartially ; endeavour to discover what *may* have caused the alienation of her love, and hasten by every kindness to re-acquire it ; for it is almost impossible a wife should be unfaithful to her husband if he have not impaired her love by some impropriety in *his* conduct.

If you follow these rules you may attempt the reformation of your erring consort with the most sanguine hopes of success, as your kindness and generous conduct will not fail to gain you her confidence and regard ; and without these all attempts to recal her to her duty will be fruitless. Should you be so fortunate as to succeed in your endeavour to restore her to virtue, your mutual love will undoubtedly be stronger than ever, and the increase of your happiness will sufficiently atone for all former sufferings. It is but natural that this should be the consequence. Repentance of her past misconduct, mutual joy at her reformation, the recollection of the dangers and sorrows which are past, and the additional relish which the conjugal embraces must derive from the long



interval during which both parties were deprived of them, cannot but be a sufficient compensation for the troubles and the self-denial with which the recovery of such an unfortunate being is attended—a compensation far more valuable and honourable than any sum which the laws can adjudge to the injured partner of a seduced female—the inefficacy of such legal punishment being sufficiently proved by the numerous trials for adultery which occupy our courts of justice.

§ XIV. But what is to be done if all these attempts to recal a faithless wife to her duty be made in vain ? In this case only two expedients remain, viz. either to separate yourself from your guilty consort, or, if circumstances render it necessary to endure her, leaving her reformation to time.

The former step ought to be taken by a prudent man only in case his wife's guilt be attended with *public* disgrace, or with the probable *ruin* of his fortune ; or if the mind of his children be in danger of being irretrievably infected by her bad example.

I would however advise you, for the preservation of your honour and the peace of your mind, as well as for your safety and the sake of



your children, to avoid all violent reproaches, ill-treatment and every thing that betrays hatred and revenge ; for this will at all times do more harm than good.. It will also be prudent, for the same reasons, not to offend nor to provoke the relations of the guilty consort, or any one of those that *are connected with her*, because you would thus needlessly increase the number of your enemies, blow up the flame of vengeance, hurt your peace of mind and your constitution by the numberless vexations to which you would expose yourself.

I would also advise you not to deny your faithless consort, neither before nor after the legal separation, that civility and respect which good breeding and decency demand, but treat her with the same politeness which you are used to shew a stranger ; never to speak ill of her, but render the state of separation as easy to her as possible, and to settle the matter so as not to injure the welfare of your children by giving vent to passionate heat.

As, however, circumstances and considerations may take place that will render it prudent to avoid a total separation from the guilty wife, and rather to continue living with her than taking the benefit of the law notwithstanding

the most glaring proofs of her criminality, I beg leave to say a few words on that head.

This case can take place only if the separation *threaten to be attended with the most ruinous consequences* ; if for instance the children would be deprived by a divorce of the whole of the fortune which they have to expect, or if the family and the connexions of the guilty wife should be so powerful as to be able to ruin you entirely. These and other considerations ought to be carefully pondered before you take a decisive step ; and if you find that a total separation from your faithless partner will evidently be attended with more lamentable consequences than you have to expect if you continue to live with her, prudence and self-preservation demand of you to prefer the latter.

In that case you will act wisely in concealing the disgrace of the faithless wife as much as possible from the public, but particularly from your servants and children. I would also advise you to avail yourself of every propitious opportunity that may offer itself to remonstrate with your unfortunate consort against her lamentable infatuation, to represent to her in mild accents, but with lively colours, the dangerous consequences of her conduct, the infamy to which

she devotes herself, and to conjure her not to disgrace herself publicly, at least, for her own sake ; to palliate her conduct, if it be censured in companies in your presence, to meet her sometimes abroad, and to treat her on such occasions with so much kindness and good nature as to lead others to think that you live with her on the most amicable footing.—This is no deception ; that being a term which conveys the supposition of an untruth by means of which we *injure* others.

It will generally produce the most salutary consequences if the injured party treat the offender, at home and abroad, with a certain degree of regard and kindness, sparing her all unnecessary pain, and proving to her by words and deeds that he does not deserve the injuries which he suffers from her misconduct. Such a wise and noble manner of proceeding will undoubtedly produce *some* good effect, particularly if the injured husband watch with additional circumspection over his own conduct, becoming more than ever a rigorous observer of the laws of propriety and virtue, and setting his children an example worthy of their imitation.

I have been thus particular with regard to this momentous point, as the crime of adultery

seems to have become the most fashionable of all vices ; the principal cause of which seems to me to originate in its not being attended in this country with public disgrace, but subject only to a penalty proportionate to the circumstances of the seducer. Libertines and rakes are too willing to part with their money for the sake of sensual gratification to be materially affected by the risk which they run in seducing the wife of an honest man ; whereas solitary confinement, transportation, or some public mark of disgrace would more effectually serve to check them in their libidinous pursuits than the heaviest fines. We find that in countries where the vile seducers of married women are publicly branded with shame, or punished with imprisonment, the crime of adultery appears to be less frequent than in this country.

§ XV. An unlimited confidence ought to subsist amongst married people.—But are there no instances at all in which one party may keep something secret from the other ? Undoubtedly there are. As the husband is designed by nature to be the counsellor of his wife and the head of his family ; as the consequences of every unguarded step taken by his consort devolve upon him, and as the laws make him responsible

for her conduct ; as the wife, in fact, is no member of the civil body, and the violation of *her* duties falls heavy upon the husband, disgraces and injures the family more immediately than the misconduct of her consort ; as she depends more on the public opinion than him, and finally, as secresy is rather a *manly* than a *female* virtue, it may more rarely be proper in the wife to be close and reserved than in her husband, and concealment and secresy towards the head of the family may produce the worst of consequences. The latter, on the contrary, who is more immediately connected with the state is frequently intrusted with secrets which he has no right to divulge, and the communication of which may embroil him with others, and who is to direct the whole house, and frequently cannot submit the plan upon which he acts to the weaker judgment of his wife, but must follow the dictates of his heart and reason with unshaken firmness, and pay no regard to the opinion of the multitude, cannot possibly be always as communicative and unreserved as his consort might wish. Difference of situation however may alter this point of view. There are men who would be reduced to the most lamentable state were they to take a single step without

the privacy and advice of their wives; and there are very talkative men and close women. Besides, a wife may be intrusted with female secrets by a friend.—In these and similar cases, prudence and probity must regulate the conduct of both parties. It is however an incontestible truth, that all conjugal happiness is at an end if real mistrust take place and candour must be *enforced*. Nothing can be more contemptible and mean in a husband, than being so vulgar as to peep secretly into the private letters of his wife, or to open them clandestinely, to search her drawers and to rummage her papers. Such miserable and ungentlemanlike practices will be of very little or no advantage to him; for nothing is easier than to elude the watchfulness of a man with regard to injuries that must be *proved*, if once the bonds of mutual attachment be destroyed, and the perplexities of delicacy and regard conquered. Nothing is less difficult for a wife than to deceive a husband whom she perfectly knows, if she once have lost all credit with him, and beside can convict him of having frequently given way to false suspicions, because his passion makes him blind, and his mistrust and jealousy provoke imposition.—Deception is generally the consequence of such an imprudent



and unjust conduct, which may occasion the ruin of the moral character of the best of women, and provoke her to commit crimes which otherwise perhaps she never would have meditated.

§ XVI. It is not advisable, for reasons which must be obvious to every intelligent man, that married people should transact all their business in common ; on the contrary, it is necessary that each party should have its proper department of activity. It is generally attended with very unpleasant consequences if the wife, for instance, compose the official reports of the husband, and the latter, when company is expected, must superintend the kitchen and assist in the nursery. This causes the greatest confusion, excites the ridicule of the domestics, and, as one relies upon the other, nothing is done properly.

§ XVII. As for the management of pecuniary concerns I cannot approve the method which is almost generally adopted in allowing ladies a certain sum of money for housekeeping, with which they are obliged to contrive to defray all expences. This creates a divided interest ; the wife is reduced to the class of servants and tempted to grow selfish, endeavours to save, is induced to think her husband too dainty,

and vexed if he invite a friend to dinner; the husband on the other hand, if he be not actuated by delicate and generous sentiments, is apt to think that he lives not well enough for his money, or if he wish for an extraordinary dish dares not to ask for it through fear of distressing his wife. I would therefore advise you to give your wife (if not a cook, a housekeeper, or any other domestic manage those concerns which properly belong to the department of the mistress of the house) a sum that is adequate to your circumstances for defraying the expences of your table, and when that is expended not to look cross if she ask for more. Should you, however, find that she expends too much, prudence and œconomy bid you to examine her accounts, and to consult with her in what manner your expences can be rendered more adequate to your income. Do not conceal your circumstances from her; and allow her a small sum for innocent pleasures, dress and charitable purposes, of which you ought to demand no account from her.

§ XVIII. ŒCONOMY is one of the first requisites of conjugal happiness. Therefore should you have acquired a habit of dissipation in your unmarried state, prudence requires, above all things, you should disengage yourself from it

as soon as you are united to a deserving consort, and use yourself to domestic œconomy. A single man may easily endure distress, want, humiliation and neglect; for if he have a pair of sound arms he may find bread any where; he can easily resolve to quit all his connexions, and support his life in a remote corner of the glôbe by the labour of his hands: but if a husband and father have reduced himself to want and poverty by bad œconomy, and angry looks meet those of his family who demand from him support, attendance, education and pleasure; if then he do not know where to get bread for to-morrow; or if his civic honour, his promotion and the establishment of his children require he should live in a decent stile, or display some degree of splendour in his dress, and he has rendered himself incapable to do it; if his creditors haunt all his steps, and attornies, jews, and usurers distress him day after day—then the unfortunate man becomes a prey to ill-humour, to bodily and mental diseases; despair seizes him and grief preys on his vitals; he endeavours to blunt the keen edge of self-created misery by abandoning himself to an incessant round of diversions and excesses; his conscience tortures his mind with pungent reproaches; the bitter

complaints of his wife follow him every where, and the groans and lamentations of his hapless children haunt him even in his sleep ; dreadful dreams torment him in the arms of his unhappy consort ; the contempt with which his purse-proud acquaintances look down upon him dispels every rising ray of hope, and gloomy clouds of despondency darken his brow ; his friends forsake him, the ridicule of his enemies tortures his soul, and in that dreadful situation he is lost to all domestic happiness ; the hapless man is then particularly anxious to shun the society of those whose peace he has ruined. Should therefore one party or the other be inclined to dissipation, it will be advisable to put a stop to the growing evil in time, and to confide the management of all pecuniary affairs to that party which can husband the purse best. It will also be needful that a regular plan should be formed, to repair the mischief which already has been done, to execute it strictly, to avoid all expences which are not utterly necessary, and to take care that something should be left for enabling the dissipating party to enjoy at least some pleasures, lest the restriction should be too onerous.

§ XIX. If my readers should ask, Whether

it will be better if the husband or the wife be rich? I must give it as my opinion that it is best if the former have the larger fortune. It will be well if both have some property to contribute a mutual share to the expences of house-keeping, and to prevent one party from being maintained entirely at the cost of the other. But if the dependance to which the poorer party naturally will be reduced on that account cannot be avoided, it is more consistent with nature that the husband, being the head of the family, should contribute the larger share towards supporting it. A person who marries a rich wife ought to take great care to avoid becoming her slave on that account.

The little attention which is paid to this rule of prudence is the principal cause which destroys the happiness of numerous families. If my wife had brought me a large fortune I would be particularly solicitous to prove to her that I have but few wants; I would incur very few private expences, and convince her that I can acquire by my own industry as much as I want; I would pay for my board, and be only the administrator of her fortune; I would keep a splendid house, because this is fit for rich people, but show her that splendour does not flatter my



vanity, that I can be as happy if I have but two dishes at dinner as if I had twenty ; that I do not want being waited upon ; that I have a pair of sound legs which can carry me as far, though not so fast, as her coach and four ; and then I would exercise the prerogative of a husband, and demand an unlimited controul over the application of her fortune.

§ XX. Is it necessary that the husband should possess a larger share of prudence and judgment than the wife ? This question is also of no small importance ; therefore let us investigate it more minutely !

The notion of prudence and judgment, with all its relations and modifications, is not always understood in the same manner. The prudence of a husband ought to be of a quite different nature from what the wife should possess ; and if prudence be confounded with knowledge of the world, or even with learning, it would be madness to desire that the other sex should realize as much of it as men. A wife ought to possess an *esprit de détail*, a finesse, a certain degree of innocent dexterity, circumspection, wit, gentleness, pliancy and patience which the male sex do not always possess in the same measure. The husband, on the other hand,



ought to be endowed with a higher degree of foresight, firminess and pertinacy, less subject to prejudices, and more indefatigable and polished than the wife.

If you take that question in a more general sense, and ask, Whether it be better if the husband possess weaker intellects and a smaller share of knowledge in matters which must be understood rightly if we wish to live happy in the world, or the wife? I reply without hesitation, that it is almost impossible a family could be governed well if the wife bear an absolute sway. There may be exceptions, but I know of none. By this observation, however, I do not mean to reflect any blame on the influence which good and prudent wives contrive to exercise over the heart of their husbands; for who could blame a deserving wife for applying her powers to that purpose, and what reasonable man is not sensible that he frequently wants gentle corrections? That exclusive arbitrary sway of which we were speaking, seems to be diametrically contrary from the order of nature. A weaker constitution of the body, an innate predilection for gratifications that are less lasting, whims of all sorts which often fetter the understanding on the most important occasions, edu-

cation, and finally the civil constitution which renders the husband responsible for the actions of his wife, design her to look out for protection, and demand of the husband to be her guardian. Nothing however is more absurd than if the wiser and stronger party be to commit itself to the protection of the weak and less wise. Ladies of eminent mental accomplishments act, therefore, evidently contrary to their own interest, and prepare for themselves numerous disagreeable scenes in suffering themselves to be seduced by a desire for dominion, to look out for and choose stupid husbands; the inevitable consequences of such an improper and imprudent choice are disgust, confusion, and the contempt of the public. Men who are so poor in spirit as not to be capable of acting the part of the master of the house properly, would do better to remain single all their life than to render themselves a laughing-stock to their children, their domestics and neighbours. I knew a weak prince, whose consort exercised such an absolute control over him, that once when she had ordered her carriage to be got ready, he sneaked into the court yard to ask the coachman, "If he knew whether he was to be of the party." Such a disgraceful want of authority renders a

husband extremely ridiculous, and no one likes to transact business with a man whose will, friendship, and manner of judging depends on the whims, nods, and corrections of his wife, who is obliged to communicate all his letters to his governess, and dares not to undertake any thing until he has held a curtain-consultation with his tutoress. A husband ought not to deny his authority even in his civility to his consort. Even the female sex despise a man who, before he can take a resolution, first must consult with his wife, always carries her cloak, is afraid of going into a company where she is not present, or must dismiss his most faithful servants if his dear helpmate dislike their physiognomy.

§ XXI. THE life of man is interspersed with numberless troubles. Even those that seem to be the favourites of fortune have frequently to struggle with secret sufferings, no matter whether they be real or imaginary, unmerited or self-created. Very few wives have sufficient spirits patiently to bear misfortunes, to give good advice in time of need, and to assist their husbands in bearing the burthens that *must* be borne. Most of them add to the troubles of their consorts by complaining unseasonably, by

talking incessantly of the state in which matters might be, were the circumstances different from what they are, or even sometimes by ill-timed and unjust reproaches. If therefore it be any-wise possible to conceal trifling misfortunes from your wife (adverse incidents of an important nature very seldom admit of it,) rather lock up your uneasiness in your heart! besides, it is no consolation to a sensible man to make the object of his tenderness a sharer in his sorrows; and who would not conceal his grief and expose himself singly to the storms of adversity, if the disclosure of his distress be not only useless, but renders his burden more onerous? But should Providence involve you in great distress, or afflict you with pungent pains which admit of no concealment; should the iron rod of unrelenting fate or powerful enemies persecute you, oh! then summon your whole firmness, and endeavour to sweeten the bitterness of the cup of misery which the faithful partner of your life must empty with you! Watch over your humour, lest you should add to the affliction of the innocent! Retire to your own apartment when your heart grows too heavy, and there ease your mind by prayer and giving vent to your tears.

Strengthen and steel your heart by the aid of philosophy, by confidence in God, hope and wise resolutions, and then appear before your consort with a serene countenance, to pour the balsam of comfort in her soul. No misery in this world is endless, and no pain so great as not to admit of intervals of alleviation. A certain heroism in the struggles against misfortune is attended with a pleasure which makes us forget the most pungent afflictions, and the consciousness of having administered comfort and consolation to others elevates our heart in an astonishing degree, and conveys an unspeakable hilarity to the mind.—I am speaking from experience.

§ XXII. We have laid it down as a principle, that a perfect harmony of thinking and temper is no necessary requisite of matrimonial happiness; it cannot however be denied, that the state of a married man is a very lamentable one, if the wife take no warm interest at all in matters which appear important, and are interesting to the husband. We are truly miserable if we must look out among strangers for sympathizing sharers in our innocent enjoyments and sorrows, and in every thing that occupies our mind and heart. I pity the man whose phlegmatic

wife mixes water with every drop of joy which the hand of rosy-coloured fancy administers to his lips ; rousing him from every blissful dream of happiness, returning frigid replies to his warmest discourses, and destroying the fairest creations of his imagination by her want of fellow-feeling. But what is to be done in such a situation ? The best advice I can give to unfortunate husbands of this class is, to make use of Job's specific, to abstain from moralizing, if no amendment is to be expected, to be silent, if his words make no impression, and to avoid all opportunities that could occasion scenes which might enrage him beyond measure, or expose him to the danger of seeing his wife's stupidity publicly ridiculed ! This will enable him to enjoy, at least, a tolerable share of *negative* happiness.

But what is to be done if Fate or our own folly should have chained us for ever to a being, who, on account of her moral defects or even vices, is undeserving of the love and regard of good people ; if our consort imbitter our life by a morose and vicious temper, and distress us by envy, avarice, or unreasonable jealousy ; or if she render herself contemptible by a false and artful heart, or be given to brutish lust and



drunkenness ? I need not to observe that many an honest man may be innocently involved in such a labyrinth of woe, if love blind his youthful judgment ; as the most vicious dispositions are frequently concealed, in the bridal state, by the most beautiful masks. It is also but too well known that many a husband by imprudent management occasions the shooting up of vices and bad habits, the seeds of which lie concealed in the heart of his wife. It would however lead me too far from my purpose, were I to give rules how to act in every individual situation of this kind—I shall therefore make only a few general observations on that head. In situations of such a nature we must pay particular regard to the preservation of our own peace, to our children and domestics, and to the public. Concerning ourselves, I would advise every one that is reduced to such a lamentable situation not to have recourse to complaints, reproaches, and quarrels, if he see that there be no hope left of correcting his vicious consort, but to use, with as much privacy as possible, such remedies as reason, probity and honour shall point out as the most efficacious. Act after a well-digested plan, devised with as much coolness of temper as possible. Ponder well whether a separation

be necessary, or by whatever other means you can render your situation tolerable, if it cannot be ameliorated, and do not suffer yourself to be diverted from the prosecution of the measures you have adopted by the semblance of amendment or caresses. However, never degrade yourself so far as to suffer your being tempted by the heat of your temper to treat your consort with harshness and severity ; for this would be adding fuel to the flame, and render your situation worse. Finally, perform your duties with additional strictness the more frequently your wife transgresses her obligations ; thus you preserve a good conscience, which is the best and firmest supporter in every misfortune.—With regard to your children, domestics and the public, prudence bids you to conceal your affliction as much as possible. Discord between married people has always a bad influence on the education of their children. Therefore, if you cannot conceal your displeasure at your consort's temper and conduct, the happiness of your children requires you should separate yourself from them, and intrust their education to the skilful hands of a stranger rather than let them be witnesses of your conjugal dissensions. The domestics of a married couple, whose dis-

cord breaks out in open quarrels, are but too apt to revolt against the laws of subordination, fidelity and candour ; parties are formed, and talebearing is encouraged ; therefore carefully avoid quarrelling with your wife in the presence of your servants. If public dissensions prevail among married people, the innocent party as well as the guilty forfeits the regard of his fellow-citizens, which ought to put you on your guard not to communicate your domestic misfortunes to strangers.

§ XXIV. Officious friends, old women, aunts and cousins are very apt to interfere on such occasions. But suffer no person whatsoever to intrude upon your domestic concerns without your leave. Repel all such officious intruders with manly firmness. People of a good disposition are reconciled without the interference of a mediator, and upon malignant minds his best efforts will have no influence. Pray that heaven may not curse you with one of those antiquated mothers-in-law who *prétend* to know every thing better than their children, and want to direct under every circumstance though they should be destitute even of common sense ; who make it their business to breed and to keep up quarrels, and to conspire with cooks, house-

keepers and chamber-maids to explore, out of Christian charity, the secrets of your neighbours. Should you however, unfortunately have obtained such a baneful piece of furniture along with your wife, I would advise your not omitting, the first time she attempts to meddle with your domestic affairs, to repel her pious services in such a manner as may terrify her from making a second attempt of that nature ! But there are also good and worthy mothers-in-law, who love the consorts of their children with true maternal tenderness, give them the best advice, and therefore ought to be esteemed a valuable acquisition, and venerated as guardian angels or a beloved and amiable wife.

Quarrels between husband and wife ought generally to be settled by themselves ; or should matters have proceeded too far, before the proper courts of justice, all intermediate instances are dangerous, and all mediators and protectors of the suffering party chosen from among strangers do more harm than good. The husband ought to be master in his own house, being thus ordained by nature and reason ! He must by no means suffer this dominion to be wrested from him, and even maintain his ground

firmly when his wiser wife opposes her secret power over his heart to his authority.

§ XXV. All these rules are, perhaps, applicable only to persons of the middle class; people of high rank and great wealth are but rarely susceptible of domestic happiness, live generally on a very ceremonious footing with their consorts, and therefore are in want of no other rules but those which a polished education prescribes; and as they commonly have a system of morals of their own, they will find in this chapter but very little that suits them.

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## CHAPTER VII.

*Rules for Lovers and those that converse with them.*

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### SECTION I.

IT is difficult, if not impossible, to converse reasonably with people who are in love; they are as unfit for social conversation as those who are intoxicated; they live only for their idol, and care little or nothing for anything else. If

you cannot avoid frequenting their society, and wish to live on an amicable footing with them, you must carry with you a sufficient stock of patience to be enabled to hear them talk of the object of their tenderness without yawning ; and you may be sure to gain their good opinion if you can prevail upon yourself to show on such occasions an interest for their concerns, or not be provoked by their follies and eccentricities in case their love should be kept secret, not watch them, or appear to have any knowledge of their passion, though the whole town be apprized of the secret (which is often the case) and finally not to irritate their jealousy.

This being all that I have to say on this subject, except a few collateral remarks, which I beg leave to subjoin, viz.—If you wish for a judicious friend who is to assist you with his advice, or to interest himself in your behalf with firmness and unshaken diligence, you will be sadly disappointed in choosing a person who is in love. If on the contrary, you be desirous to meet with a sympathizing and sentimental friend, whom you expect to whine and sigh with you, to lend you money without demanding security, to subscribe to your works, to assist you in relieving the distressed, in pacify-



ing an enraged father, joining you in the execution of some romantic prank, keeping you company in your follies, or in applauding your verses, you will undoubtedly do well to apply, as occasion may require, either to a happy or an unsuccessful lover !

It would be useless to prescribe rules for lovers how to act when they are in company with the object of their tenderness ; as these people are not often thoroughly collected, it would be as great folly to demand of them an observance of certain modes in their conversation with the object of their wishes, as it would be to desire a madman to rage in verse ; or a person who has the tooth-ache to groan to music. Yet surely something may be said, the observation of which would prove salutary, could it only be hoped that such people would pay attention to the dictates of reason.

§ III. The first love creates astonishing revolutions in the manner of thinking and the whole nature of man. A person who never was in love can form no idea of the bliss which the conversation of lovers affords them, while those that have trafficked too long with their heart lose all susceptibility for sensations of that nature.

The first declaration of love produces most wonderful effects. A person who has frequently trifled with his heart, and been in love with different females, will not indeed find it difficult to express his sentiments on a propitious opportunity, if he should feel inclined once more to pay his devoirs at the shrine of Love ; and the coquette knows well enough what answer she must return on such an occasion : she pretends at first not to believe that he is serious, apprehends that the gentleman is going to divert himself at her expence, that the reading of novels has turned his brains, or if he urge his suit with more importunity, and she thinks it time for her to be convinced by degrees that he is in earnest, she beseeches him in the first instance to spare her weakness, and not to betray her into a confession which would make her blush ; then the enraptured lover offers to press the sweet charmer to his heart, and protests he is the happiest creature in the world, but the offended fair one solemnly assures him that she will never permit such liberties to be taken with her, and very gravely reminds him that the laws of probity and honour require that he should spare her weakness, while she dispenses her favours with the most frugal œconomy to enjoy

the pretty romance the longer ; and if nothing will serve to protract the closing scene any further, a quarrel is called to her assistance to put off the happy moment in which the last favour is to be granted.

People of this class, however, feel nothing at all during their amorous dalliance, laugh at the farce when they are by themselves, can calculate with the greatest accuracy how far they shall have advanced in a day or two, and enjoy a sound and undisturbed sleep notwithstanding the apparent cruelty of their charmer.

The case is different with two innocent hearts, who, being warmed the first time by the genial fire of love, wish to give vent to their blissful and guiltless sensations, and yet cannot take courage to declare by words what their eyes and gestures have so frequently and plainly expressed. The young man looks tenderly at the object of his love. She blushes ; her looks betray an uneasy and flurried mind when he converses too long or with too much apparent freedom with another female ;—indignation flashes in his eyes, he scarcely can refrain from giving vent to his anger, if with a smiling countenance she whisper something to a stranger, and his every action upbraids the thoughtless maid ;—the re-

proach is felt, immediate satisfaction is given ; the offensive conversation is suddenly terminated ; the reconciled lover thanks the atoning fair one by a tender smile, and the clouds which enveloped his brow are instantly dispelled by cheerfulness, accompanied with the most lively sallies of jocundity and good humour ; assignations are made by the eyes for the next day ; the lovers mutually beg pardon, exculpate their conduct, warn each other against the intrusion of observers, acknowledge their reciprocal rights—and nevertheless have not yet declared by a single *word* what they feel for each other. Both parties however are anxious for an occasion of coming to an explanation ; the long-sought opportunity offers at last, presents itself repeatedly, and both suffer it to escape unimproved, or at most only betray their sentiments by a tender pressure of the hand, when a still more favourable unexpected occasion again offers itself, but neither dare to *utter* their sentiments ; they are thoughtful, doubt whether their love be returned, and tremblingly delay coming to an éclaircissement, although their passion be the fable of the whole town, and the object of the vilest aspersion. When at length the timid confes-

sion breaks from the quivering lips, and is returned with stammering and half stifled words, attended by a convulsive pressure of the hand that thrills the inmost fibres of the heart, and electrifies, as it were, the whole frame ; then we begin first to live entirely for each other, care little for all the world, are blind to the observations and deaf to the whispers of those that are near us, are happy in every company where the object of our tenderness is present, fear not the frowns of misfortune by her side, suspect not that sickness, poverty and oppression may overtake us on the flowery path of love, are at peace with all the world, and care not for the comforts of life.—You who have seen such blissful times, say ! is it possible to dream a sweeter, happier dream ? Is one of all the fantastic joys of life so innocent, natural and harmless as this ? Can any other sensation render us so unspeakably happy, so gay and peaceful ?—What a pity it is, that that blissful state of enchantment cannot last for ever, and that we are awakened but too frequently and too terribly from that Elisean trance ?

§ IV. In the matrimonial state jealousy is a dreadful evil that destroys all peace and happiness, and every quarrel may be attended with

fatal consequences ; whereas in love, jealousy creates variety and additional relish : nothing is sweeter than the moment of reconciliation after short quarrels, and such scenes serve to cement the union more strongly. But dreadful is the jealousy of a coquette, and you ought to tremble at the vengeance of a woman whose love you have scorned, or for whom your heart has ceased to be interested, if she continue to covet the possession of your person, no matter whether she be actuated by wanton desires, vanity or caprice ! She will persecute you with furious ire, and no kindness on your part, no forbearance, no secrecy with regard to your former connexion, nor all the civilities which you pay her in public will save you from the dire effects of her frantic passion, particularly if she have not learnt to fear you.

§ V. MYSOGYNISTS declaim loudly, that the fair sex do not love half so faithfully and firmly as man does ; that vanity, curiosity, delight in romantic adventures, or the calls of sensual wants are the only charms which attract them to our sex, and that we can count on female fidelity only while we can gratify one or the other of these passions and propensities, as time and occasion require ; while others are of a dif-



ferent opinion, and paint in the most charming colours the firmness, cordiality and fire of the female heart which is animated with love. The former impute to the fair sex a larger share of sensuality and irritability than of nobler sentiments, and pretend that no married man ought to believe his wife if she assure him that she possesses a cool temper; whereas the latter maintain that the purest and most sacred love, destitute of all sensual desire, nay even of passion, can animate only a female bosom in its intire fulness. I leave those to decide on the merits of this subject, that possess a greater knowledge of the female heart than myself. I shall not venture to give my opinion on this delicate point, though I have been an attentive observer of the other sex during a long and frequent intercourse with them. Thus much however I can presume to maintain, without injury to either sex, that men cannot pretend with any colour of truth to surpass women in fidelity and fulness of love. The history of every age affords numerous instances of women who, scorning all difficulties and dangers, were attached with the most surprising and unshaken firmness to their lovers. I know of no greater felicity than that which flows from such a cordial

and unconquerable love. Thoughtless minds are to be met with as well amongst men as amongst women; the whole human race are subject to the desire of change; new impressions, produced by a superiour degree of amiable qualities, no matter whether they be real or imaginary, can supplant the liveliest sentiments; but I am almost tempted to say that instances of infidelity are more numerous amongst men than amongst women, but are less noticed and make less noise than those of female inconstancy; we are more difficult to be fettered for ever than the other sex, and it would indeed be an easy task for me to state the real causes of this phenomenon, did not the scope of the present work prevent me from discussing this point.

§ VI. TRUE and congenial love enjoys secretly the blessings which attend it, and refrains not only from priding itself with favours received, but also scarcely dares to acknowledge to itself the whole extent of its happiness. That period in which we have not yet disclosed our love by words, though we understand the mystic meaning of every glance and every look of the beloved object, affords the happiest moments of congenial and pure felicity. Those joys are

most enrapturing which we bestow and receive without accounting for them to our understanding. The delicacy of our feelings frequently prevents us from speaking of favours which lose their greatest value, and can no longer be reciprocated with propriety when they are made subjects of discussion. We grant silently what we are bound to refuse if it be requested, or if it be visible that it is granted premeditatedly.

§ VII. IN those years in which the heart is but too apt to run away with the understanding, many a thoughtless young man lays the foundation of his future misery by a rash promise of marriage. He recollects not in the trance of love how serious and important such a step is, and that this is the most difficult, dangerous and indissoluble of all obligations which we can take upon ourselves. He unites himself for life with a being who appeared in his eyes blended by passion, to be gifted with qualities which experience and the light of sober reason discover to him to have been merely delusory, when too late he perceives that he has rendered himself unspeakably miserable by trusting to appearances ; or he does not consider that such an union adds to the wants, cares and labours of

life, and is forced to struggle by the side of a beloved wife with want and sorrows, and doomed to feel all the blows of adverse fate with double force ; or he breaks his promise, if his eyes be opened before the indissoluble knot be tied, and then he is tortured by the reproaches of a polluted conscience—But of what use are sober advice and prudent counsel in the moment of mental intoxication ? As for the rest, I refer my readers to the XIV and XV sections of the following chapter.

§ VIII. If love and intimacy have attached you to an amiable woman, and your bonds should be dissolved either by adverse fate or inconstancy and fickleness on one part, or any other cause, the laws of honour demand of you not to act ungenerously after the connexion has ceased. Do not suffer yourself to be tempted to take a disgraceful revenge, nor to make an improper use of letters and the confidence that was placed in you. The man who is capable of aspersing the character of a female who once was dear to his heart, deserves the contempt of every honest mind ; and how many who in other respects are not over amiable, owe the favour to accomplished women, to approved discretion and delicacy !

## CHAPTER VIII.

*On Conversation with the Fair Sex.*

## SECTION I.

**B**EFORE we proceed further I must observe, that the notice which I am bound to take of the defects of the female character in general, is in nowise meant to depreciate the numerous good qualities which we discover not only in individuals, but also in the whole sex. To be silent in respect of the former in order to give the greater lustre to the latter is the practice of a venal flatterer, a part for which I profess myself wholly unqualified. Most writers however, who speak of the female sex, seem to be particularly solicitous to descant only on their defects, which system likewise equally militates against my purpose. An authour who writes on the conversation with men, cannot avoid glancing at those defects which we must tolerate and spare if we wish to preserve Social Happiness. Either sex, every rank and age, and every individual character is subject to a variety of defects which are so intertwined with his nature as to appear

inherent. The scope of this work requires I should speak of them as far as my knowledge renders me competent for the task ; and my readers I presume will find that I am not blind to the virtues which render the conversation between men and women, old and young people, the wise and the ignorant, the rich and the poor, a source of pleasure and happiness ; nor that I mean to praise or censure any class at the expense of its opposite. Thus much by way of preface to this subject.

§ II. NOTHING is more adapted to give the last polish to the education of a young man than the conversation with virtuous and accomplished women. Their society serves to smoothe the rough edges of our character and to mellow our temper. In short, the man who has never been connected with females of the better class is not only deprived of many of the purest pleasures, but also will have little success in Social Life ; and I should not like to be connected by the bonds of friendship with a man who has a bad opinion and speaks ill of the female sex in general. I have spent the happiest hours of my life in the society of amiable women ; and if I have any commendable qualities, or if after having been deceived so frequently by men and



fickle fortune, bitterness, vexation and resentment have not expelled benevolence and love from my soul, I owe the whole entirely to the salutary impressions which female conversation has made upon my mind.

§ III. WOMEN possess a peculiar facility in discerning those men who sympathize with them, feel interested in their conversation, and can accommodate themselves to their tone. We should be very unjust were we to maintain, that personal beauty only can produce lively impressions upon their minds ; the contrary being frequently the case. I know young men of the most striking personal appearance who are very unsuccessful with the fair sex, while those whose form is far from being handsome are great favourites with them. There is a peculiar method of rendering ourselves agreeable to the sex, which can be learnt only of themselves ; and the man who is ignorant of it will never succeed in ingratiating himself with them, how great soever his personal and mental accomplishments be. There are men who shamefully abuse the power which they possess of pleasing the ladies ;—those that are trusted with adult daughters, and being allowed at all times free access to the unsuspecting fair, having first acquired the sem-

blance and character of harmless creatures, are permitted to sport the most wanton jokes, and frequently indulged with opportunities which prove lamentable preludes to certain and bitter repentance. The abuse of that art however does not condemn its proper application. A small tincture of female gentleness, though not degenerating into unmanly weakness; favours, but neither so great nor so particular as to attract public notice, or demand greater in return, nor yet so private as to be overlooked, or not at all valued; polite marks of attention on trifling occasions, which scarcely admit of thanks, and consequently convey no obligation, seem to be free from pretension, yet nevertheless are understood and valued; a kind of ocular language, though very different from amorous ogling, which is understood and felt by a tender and sensible heart without requiring the assistance of words; a nice delicacy in displaying certain sentiments; a free and open conversation, which must never degenerate into impudent and vulgar familiarity; at times a look of soft melancholy; a certain romantic enthusiasm which borders neither on the sentimental nor the adventurous; modesty without timidity; intrepidity, courage and vivacity; agility of body,

skill, nimbleness and pleasing talents—these, I think, are most conducive to gain us the favour of the fair sex.

§ IV. THE consciousness of being in want of protection, and the belief that man is a being who can afford it, is also implanted by nature in the mind of those women who have firmness and resolution enough to protect themselves. For this reason even ladies of a meek and gentle disposition feel a kind of aversion from men who are weak and infirm. They have the tenderest compassion for suffering people ; as for instance for wounded or sick persons, but habitual and lasting infirmities, which impede the free use of bodily and mental faculties, will undoubtedly deprive you of the affection of even the most chaste and modest woman.

§ V. THE ladies have frequently been accused of feeling a particular interest for libertines and rakes. If this be true, I cannot see why it should be so very reprehensible as many seem to think. If the consciousness of their innate weakness render them more tolerant than we are, this does honour to their heart : however, it is but just to confess that we are actuated frequently by envy to censure such happy criminals ; whereas we are secretly pleased with a

Lovelace, and other polished rakes, when we behold them only on paper and on the stage. The cause of this phenomenon originates, most probably, in an obscure sensation, which tells us that deviations of this sort require a certain activity and energy which always create interest. As for the rest, it has been observed that most ladies are tolerant only to *handsome* men and *ugly* women.

§ VI. I must also observe, that cleanliness and elegance of dress serve very much to recommend us to the ladies, and that they are very keensighted in discovering the smallest inattention in these particulars.

§ VII. AVOID paying homage in a similar manner to several ladies at one time and in the same place, if you be bent on obtaining the affection and favour of an individual female; they will forgive us trifling acts of faithlessness, nay, they will sometimes like us the better on that account; but at the moment in which we are speaking to them of our sentiments, we must feel what our lips utter and show that they are the sole object and cause of our sensations. All is over if they perceive that we address our tender discourses to every woman who comes in

our way ; for they are desirous to possess our affection undivided.

§ VIII. Two ladies who have pretensions of the same nature, no matter whether they be founded on beauty, learning, or any other accomplishment, agree but rarely in the same company ; yet they may at times be reconciled in some degree ; but if a third, who has the same pretensions, should unfortunately join their circle, we must give up all ideas of checking the rising tempest, which inevitably will break out on the slightest occasion.

Therefore, take particular care in the presence of a lady who pretends to superiour talents or anything else of that nature, not to praise another too much for the same accomplishments, especially if the latter be a rival of hers. All persons who are conscious of their internal merit and have a desire to shine, particularly ladies, are apt to wish to be admired exclusively, no matter whether it be on account of beauty, taste, talents, or any other superiour quality. Therefore, never speak of the likeness which you perceive in the lady with whom you are conversing and her children, or any other person. The ladies have sometimes singular

whims, and it is frequently difficult to know what ideas they have of themselves, and how they wish to look. One affects simplicity, innocence and artlessness ; another presumes to possess grace, a noble air and dignity of deportment ; a third delights to be told that her features express a great deal of meekness and good nature ; another wishes to be thought firm, manly and high-spirited ; one pretends to look very sickly and nervous, while another rejoices to be told that she has a healthy and fresh appearance. This weakness is trifling and innocent, and you will do well in accommodating yourself to such singularities.

§ IX. Most ladies wish to be constantly amused, and an *entertaining* companion is frequently received better by them than a worthy and grave man whose conversation is graced with wisdom, but who prefers being silent to engaging in idle talk. No subject, however, is more entertaining to them than their own praise, if it be uttered in a proper manner. An aged matron will not be angry with you if you discover traces of former beauty in her features ; and many a mother of adult children will not deem it an offence to be mistaken for her daughter. It is generally a dangerous matter



to speak of the age of a lady, and if you be wise you will not touch this subject at all. If you know the art of giving them an opportunity of appearing to advantage, your society will be agreeable to them, though you should not be able to amuse them much. But is not this the case, more or less, with all men? All mortals are pleased to shine, but women in particular, because we nourish their vanity from their infancy, and but seldom give them an opportunity of seeing their own defects in a proper light.

§ X. CURIOSITY is a prominent feature of the female character, and prudence requires we should pay some attention to it in our conversation with the other sex, and endeavour to provoke, to amuse and to satisfy it as circumstances require. It is most singular to observe how far this propensity sometimes will carry them. Even the most compassionate of their sex have frequently an irresistible desire to see scenes of horror, executions, operations and the like, to hear horrid stories and to view objects which the firmer man cannot behold without aversion. For this reason they are, in general, particularly fond of reading such novels, and to see such plays as are crowded with horrid incidents and

dreadful apparitions. For this reason some of them have so strange a desire to explore the secrets of others and to pry into the actions of their neighbours, though malice, envy and jealousy be not always the motive by which they are actuated. Lord Chesterfield says; "If you wish to ingratiate yourself with women, trust them with a secret!" He means, indeed, only with one of no great importance.—But why only with a trifling one? Are not many women more discreet than men? All depends upon the object of the secret.

§ XI. EVEN the most excellent women are more changeable in their humours and less consistent at all times than men in general. This arises from the greater irritability of their nerves, which renders them easier to be affected, and from the weakness of their frame, which exposes them to many unpleasant sensations of which we have no notion. Be not therefore astonished, my friends, if you think you do not meet every day with the same degree of sympathy and love in the object of your affection. Bear patiently with these transient humours, but take care not to intrude upon them in such moments of irritability and ill-temper, to torment them with your wit or to offer unseason-

able consolation. Endeavour to find out what they like best to hear in every particular disposition of mind, and wait patiently for the moment when they are sensible of the value of your indulgence and forbearance, and disposed to atone for their errors.

§ XII. The female sex sometimes find a certain pleasure in teasing others, and giving uneasiness even to those persons who are dearest to them. This also is the effect of their humour, and not of a bad and malignant disposition. If you bear these transient bursts of ill-humour with patience and good-nature, and are careful to avoid widening the trifling difference into a formal breach by passionate behaviour, the fair tormentor will soon atone for the injuries which you suffer by additional kindness, and you will obtain one claim more to her affection.

§ XIII. In such and all petty contentions and differences with the other sex we must yield them the triumph of the moment, and be careful of not exposing them to ridicule; their vanity for this would never forgive us.

§ XIV. It is almost needless to repeat here what has been asserted already so often, that the resentment of an ill-tempered and malig-

nant woman is dreadful, cruel and extremely difficult to be appeased. It indeed almost surpasses belief how expert such furies are in finding out means to torment and persecute an honest man, by whom they conceive themselves to have been offended, how implacable their hatred is, and in how mean and degrading a manner they sometimes satisfy their thirst for vengeance. The author of this observation has had the misfortune to experience this in a most painful degree. A single thoughtless step of his early youth, by which the pride and vanity of a woman, who had injured him first, were offended, was the cause of his meeting with insurmountable difficulties and opposition wherever he afterwards was obliged, by his fate, to apply for assistance and protection. The fiend-like malignity of that woman instigated calumniators of the blackest cast to precede him with the foulest aspersions, to oppose all his actions, and to ruin every plan which he formed for the benefit of his family. The greatest prudence and circumspection were incapable to ward off the effects of her hatred, and even his public acknowledgment that he was sensible of the injury which he had offered her, was insufficient to reconcile her revengeful spirit. This impla-

cable woman ceased not to persecute him, until at last he resigned every thing that rendered the assistance of others necessary, and confined himself entirely to a domestic existence, of which she cannot rob him. And that woman is a princess, who has it in her power to render thousands happy, and has been gifted by nature with the most excellent abilities and uncommon personal charms.

As for the rest, we observe in general, that the weaker are always more cruel in their vengeance than the strong, because, perhaps, the consciousness of that weakness renders the sense of the injury which they suffer more acute, and makes them more eager to find an opportunity of trying their strength, for once at least.

§ XV. A PHILOSOPHICAL treatise of Professor Meiners on the question, "Whether it be in our power to fall in love, or to resist the influence of this passion at pleasure?" leaves me little room for hoping that I shall be able to say anything new on the means which we must use to preserve our liberty in our conversation with amiable women. Love, indeed, is a sweet tormentor, which surprises us when we are least aware of it, and in consequence commonly



begin to counteract it when it is too late ; yet it is but too often attended with bitter sufferings and the ruin of all peace and happiness ; for hopeless love is one of the most dreadful evils, and external relations sometimes throw insurmountable obstacles in the way even of the noblest and tenderest inclinations ; it will be useful, particularly for a person whom nature has gifted with a lively temper and a warm imagination, to endeavour to obtain a certain degree of dominion over his sensibility and feelings, and if he find himself unequal to the task—to flee the temptation. To be beloved and incapable of returning love for love is extremely distressing to a feeling heart ; it is a dreadful situation to love without having any hope of success ; and it is sufficient to fill the heart with black despair when we are doomed to reap infidelity and imposition for faithful and unbounded affection. The man who has found out infallible means to obviate all this, has discovered the philosopher's stone—I confess I have not ; and know no other than timely flight.

§ XVI. There are villains who have so little regard for the virtue, probity and peace of their fellow-creatures, as not to scruple seducing in-



nocent and inexperienced girls by insidious arts, or at least to delude them by false expectations, and even by the promise of marriage ; thus procuring for themselves some moments of transient gratification, but afterwards abandon the unhappy victims of their sensuality, who on their account declined every other connexion, and are but too often ruined for life by the infamous duplicity of such unprincipled wretches. The ignominy of such conduct must be obvious to every one that has the least spark of love for honour and justice left in his bosom ; and for those that are entirely destitute of these feelings I do not write. There is, however, another kind of conduct, which in its consequences is no less dangerous, though it be not equally criminal in point of motive ; and I must beg leave to address a few words of admonition to my readers respecting the same. Many of our sex are of opinion, that the conversation with young ladies cannot be at all interesting unless they flatter their vanity, or let their words and gestures bespeak a certain degree of warmth and affection. This serves not only to nourish the already too great propensity of the other sex to vanity, but also induces them to mistake every peculiar degree of attention which

we show them for an offer of marriage. The fop is not sensible of this, or if he should perceive it is too thoughtless to reflect on the consequences such an error may produce; he relies upon the consciousness of having never intimated such an offer in direct terms; and when he ceases paying his court to the deluded fair one, she is rendered as unhappy as if he had imposed upon her with the utmost premeditation. The poor forsaken girl pines away while disappointed hope rankles in her heart, and the heedless and unthinking youth pays similar addresses to others, without even suspecting the mischief he has done.

Another class of men destroy the peace of inexperienced females either by irritating their curiosity and sensuality by wanton discourses and a luxuriant wit, or heating their imagination by instilling into their mind romantic ideas, diverting their attention from those objects with which they ought to occupy themselves agreeably to their calling, destroying their sense of domestic felicity, or rendering a young and simple country girl dissatisfied with her situation by amusing her imagination with a seducing picture of the pleasures of a town-life. As I do not write

merely to teach how we may be an agreeable, but also how we must act to become an useful companion, I conceive myself called upon by my duty to warn against such conduct; and believe me, my young friends, all good and careful parents will bless you, and cheerfully admit you to their daughters; nay, they will think themselves happy in uniting their only child with you if you follow my advice, and thus acquire the character of a prudent and conscientious young man.

§ XVII. HERE I ought to say a few words on the conversation with coquets and seducing females; but as this subject presents a wide field for observation, and having great reason to apprehend that my labour would be attended with little success, shall therefore be very concise. The snares which a young man has to dread are innumerable; and I advise my readers to flee that class of females like the plague. These reprobates are uncommon adepts in the art of dissimulation, of lying with the greatest impudence, and of affecting the most amiable sentiments to gratify their vanity, sensuality, vengeance or any other passion. It is extremely difficult to discover whether a coquet loves you really on your own account. Even the

most unequivocal instances of disinterestedness are no certain proofs that such an abandoned woman loves you sincerely. She rejects, perhaps, your silver to obtain the easier possession of yourself and your gold; or her temper renders her more eager to gratify her sensuality than to satisfy her thirst for lucre. Should she have resisted many temptations to impose upon you with safety, displayed a tender care for your fame and honour, should she not only never attempt prevailing upon you to break off other more natural and honourable connexions, but readily sacrifice to you beauty, youth, gain, splendour and vanity; this would prove nothing else but that even a coquet at times may possess some good and amiable qualities, and prudence would nevertheless demand you to be on your guard and not to trust her too implicitly. A woman who disregards chastity and modesty, the first and most sacred of all female virtues, cannot possibly have any regard for more delicate duties. I do not however mean to degrade all unhappy, fallen and seduced females to the contemptible class of coquets and prostitutes. True love can frequently call an erring heart to virtue. It has been often maintained that a woman who knows the danger from experience,

is more difficult to be seduced than another who has never been led into temptation ; however, this kind of deviation renders sincere amendment at all times very precarious, and no situation is more humiliating and distressing for a sensible man, than to see the person dear to his heart despised by others, and to have reason to blush at the bonds which are sacred to him and constitute the happiness of his life. As for the rest, pure and virtuous love is the best guardian of our innocence, and the conversation with chaste and accomplished women purifies the juvenile sense for virtue, and arms the heart of a young man against all studied and lustful artifices of seducing females. I must observe on this occasion, that it is extremely hard and unjust, that men should scruple so little in excusing all manner of libidinous excesses committed by those of our own sex, while we are disinclined to forgive the least deviation from the path of virtue of which a person of the other sex is guilty, who from their earliest youth are tempted by *our* artifices to listen to the voice of sin, and to give way to the powerful allurements of seduction.

It is frequently maintained that every woman can be seduced ; should this assertion be deemed

true ; or should we scout the idea as rank calumny ? It is but justice to confess, this can be denied as little as that the virtue of every son of Eve is liable to give way, if his weak side be attacked, and internal as well as external circumstances come to the aid of the artful seducer. But what does this prove ? It proves no more than we all are frail vessels. If we at the same time consider, that the senses of the other sex in general are more irritable than ours, and if we reflect upon the powerful charms of seduction, flattery, curiosity and vanity with which they are constantly beset, and that even the smallest spot of that sort cannot escape observation, because they have no civil relation, and cannot palliate their deviations by those higher virtues which *our* situation and connexion with the state enable us to exhibit, it would be highly unjust not to have patience with them, or to censure every false step into which they are betrayed by our sex with too much severity.—But let us dismiss this subject, and turn ourselves to a higher class of females—to the *learned* ladies.

§ XVIII. I CANNOT but acknowledge that I am always seized with a kind of shivering, when I am placed in company near a woman



who pretends to learning. It is to be wished that the ladies would consider, that nothing renders them more amiable and interesting than to see them strictly adhere to the simple destination of nature, and anxious to distinguish themselves by a faithful performance of the duties of their calling. What will it avail them to attempt rivaling men in pursuits for which they are unequal, and of which they are frequently uninformed of the first rudiments, which are inculcated into boys as soon as they begin to use the faculty of reasoning. There are ladies who very often put professed men of learning to the blush by the penetration and acuteness of their judgment, by their uncommon talents, exquisite accomplishments, their philosophical turn of mind and clearness of expression and diction. But how small, comparatively speaking, is the number of such ladies, and how wrong would it be to deduce from these exceptions a general rule ! Besides it is an indispensable duty of every friend to domestic and Social Happiness, not to encourage middling female geniuses to aspire, at the expense of their own felicity and that of others, at a height which so few of them are capable of attaining.

It undoubtedly is laudable in a lady to endea-

your rendering her conversation and stile of writing graceful by study and the assistance of chaste and elegant literature; but it certainly cannot be inferred from this, that a woman is to range through all the numerous branches of learning. It ever creates pity if not disgust, when we hear such infatuated pretenders to learning boldly decide upon those important subjects of erudition, which for centuries have baffled the laborious study of the most eminent of the literati, who have not been ashamed to confess their being unable to comprehend them perfectly; and to hear an infatuated woman decide upon them at tea-table, in the most peremptory manner, while she scarcely has a clear idea of the subject in question, cannot fail exciting the strongest emotions of pity and contempt. Nevertheless, the crowd of fops and admirers pays the most extravagant applause to the uncommon knowledge of the learned lady, thereby confirming her in her unfortunate infatuation. Thus being led to look upon the most important concerns of her family, upon the education of her children and the good opinion of her unlearned acquaintances and connexions as mere trifles, believing herself intitled to shake off the yoke of domestic subordination, slighting

all other women, rendering herself and her husband odious, and dreaming incessantly of ideal worlds, her imagination opposes the dictates of sound reason, and all the domestic affairs are thrown into disorder and confusion; the victuals are brought upon table cold or half raw; debts are heaped upon debts; the poor husband must go abroad with torn stockings; when he pants for the enjoyment of domestic pleasures, his learned helpmate entertains him with quotations from pamphlets, magazines and reviews, or presses him to listen to a recital of her lame verses, and reproaches him severely with being insensible of the inestimable value of the treasure which to his torment he is blessed with.

I hope the candid reader will not tax me with having drawn this picture with too much asperity. Amongst the fifteen or twenty authoresses who make the press groan from time to time with the productions of their pens, I know of scarcely half a dozen who being confessedly geniuses of a superior class, have a real calling to cultivate the field of literature; and these ladies are so amiable, neglect their domestic duties so little, and are so sensible of the ridiculous behaviour of their half-learned sisters, as to give me sufficient reason to be persuaded, that they

will not think themselves pointed at or offended by the picture which I have delineated in the antecedent lines.

But may it not also be said of the authours of our sex, that but few of the great number of our present writers have a real claim to excellency? Undoubtedly! But we must observe, that some allowance ought to be made to the latter, as they may be misled by a desire for fame or gain, which cannot well be admitted as an excuse for the former, when they, with indifferent talents and destitute of sufficient knowledge, venture on a career which neither nature nor the civil constitution has assigned to them. As for the conversation with ladies who pretend to learning, it is obvious that if this claim be founded on solid erudition, it must be extremely pleasant and instructive; but concerning those that intrude themselves upon the republic of literature, notwithstanding their poverty of spirit, I can give no better advice than to have patience with their deplorable infatuation, and to take care not to controvert their bold assertions by arguments, or to attempt reforming their taste if you cannot demean yourself so much as to encrease the servile herd of their admirers.

§ XIX THE female sex possess in a much

higher degree than we do the gift of concealing their real thoughts and sentiments. Even ladies of less refined faculties are sometimes uncommon adepts in the art of dissimulation. There are instances in which this art affords them protection against the snares with which they are beset by unprincipled men. The seducer may be certain of succeeding when he sees that the heart or sensuality of the ladies league with him against their own principles ; it would therefore be unjust to censure them for appearing sometimes different from what they really are ; yet we ought not to overlook this in our conversation with the fair sex. We should be frequently mistaken were we to believe that they are always indifferent to those whom they treat with visible coolness, or that they are at all times particularly interested for others whom they seem to distinguish, and with whom they converse familiarly in public. They have frequently recourse to that artifice for no other purpose than concealing the real state of their heart, and sometimes it is only the effect of their humour or obstinacy, or intended merely to torment a little the object of their affection. To decypher the character of a woman completely requires a profound study of the female

heart, a long intercourse with the most accomplished persons of the sex ; in short, more than the scope of these sheets permits me to say.

§ XX. I shall not enlarge upon the precaution which the conversation with antiquated coquets requires ; nor shall I say anything with regard to the prudes and devotees with whom a man, as I am told, may take greater liberties in private than in company, and with whom a close and enterprising man, as the wicked world pretends, succeeds best. I shall also not say anything of those antiquated gossips who, out of mere charity and piety, expose the character of their neighbours and acquaintances from time to time, and consequently whom we must not provoke—I shall be silent about females of that description, because I should be sorry to challenge the resentment of these good ladies, and take this opportunity of declaring that I do not believe a word of the calumnies with which a wicked world asperses their immaculate honour.

§ XXI. Before I conclude this chapter, I beg leave to say a few words more on the happiness which flows from the conversation of good and accomplished women. I have already observed, that I owe to the conversation with them the happiest hours of my life, and, indeed, I have



reason to acknowledge it. Their tender sensibility, their ability to divine and comprehend every thing so quickly, to read the sentiments of the heart in the countenance; their nice sense of those little favours which contribute so much to sweeten life, their charming and artless wit, their frequent and uncommonly just judgments, unbiassed by learned, systematic and prejudiced opinions; their inimitably amiable humour, interesting even in its ebbs and floods; their patience in long and painful sufferings, though they should in the first moment, when the affliction comes upon them, distress their consorts by complaints; the gentleness with which they comfort, nurse and forbear; the innocent loquacity and frankness with which they enliven society—all this I know and esteem; and which ought, I think, to convince the candid reader, that the few observations I was bound to make to the disadvantage of some of the fair sex, did not originate in censoriousness or malice.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.







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